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## Contents

### **Regulations for the award of Master/Doctor in Professional Studies (including specialist validated pathways) on the basis of Public Works ..... 3**

1 Principles .....	3
2 Eligibility .....	3
3 Standard of the Doctor of Professional Studies (DProf).....	4
4 Standard of the Master of Professional Studies (MProf) .....	4
5 Context statement.....	5
6 Application, interview and acceptance .....	7
7 Enrolment and progression.....	8
8 Preparation for submission.....	9
9 Public works in non-written form .....	10
10 Examiners .....	11
11 Submission of public works for examination .....	11
12 Previous submission of works .....	12
13 Examination.....	12
14 Examination arrangements .....	12
15 Examiner’s report .....	13
16 Disposal of works submitted .....	14
17 Award .....	14
18 Candidates in debt.....	15
19 Appeal .....	15

### **Appendix 1 Presentation and binding of projects submitted for examination 16**

Titles, headings, and numberings .....	16
Tables, diagrams, graphs .....	16
References, footnotes, and bibliography .....	16
Appendices.....	17
Word count .....	17
Identification and presentation .....	17

### **Appendix 2 Presentation and binding requirements for the final format (post-examination) - IWBL candidates only ..... 18**

Binding .....	19
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<b>Appendix 3 University appeal regulations and procedures 2010/11 .....</b>	<b>20</b>
Appeals procedure for research degree candidates.....	20
<b>Appendix 4 Complaints and grievance procedures.....</b>	<b>24</b>
4.1 Introduction.....	24
4.2 Principles which underpin the general student complaints procedures	24
4.3 Procedures .....	25
4.4 Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education .....	29
4.5 Notes .....	30
<b>Appendix 5 Electronic repository form .....</b>	<b>32</b>



# Regulations for the award of Master/Doctor in Professional Studies (including specialist validated pathways) on the basis of Public Works

## 1 Principles

The University's professional research degrees by public works [MProf and DProf will be used as generic terms throughout these regulations and should be understood to include all specialist validated pathways (SVP) of the MProf/DProf, including MPsych/DPsych] consist of the presentation of a submission and the defence of the submission at an oral examination. The submission is made up of the candidate's public works undertaken at the University or the partner institution prior to enrolment for the degree, and a context statement undertaken under the supervision of the University. The University's professional research degrees by public works are equivalent to professional research degrees by project in every substantive way.

A candidate must satisfy the examiners both in respect of the submission and orally in order to be awarded the degree.

The University shall consider applications for these degrees in any field for which supervision can be provided, subject to the requirement that the public works and context statement together are of the requisite standard and are capable of assessment by appropriate examiners.

The context statement shall normally be 8,000 to 10,000 words for MProf and 15,000 to 20,000 words for DProf.

## 2 Eligibility

The University shall consider applications from staff of the University, and from persons who have no connection with the University.

The University shall consider an application from a person based outside the United Kingdom provided it is satisfied that the arrangements proposed for supervision enable frequent and substantial contact between the candidate and a University-appointed adviser/consultant.

### 3 Standard of the Doctor of Professional Studies (DProf)

The standard of the DProf is that expected of a candidate who has engaged in advanced work based learning, from taught and major project sources, which has the potential to achieve major organisational change and/or excellence in professional practice resulting in original work worthy of publication in complete or abridged form. The candidate must have shown evidence of ability to undertake self-managed and/or collaborative research and project development and orally defended the product of the study to the satisfaction of the assessors.

The candidate must have demonstrated:

- 3.1 the general ability to conceptualise, design and implement a work-based project that has generated new knowledge, applications or understanding, which is at the forefront of the professional area, and has adjusted the project design in the light of unforeseen problems or opportunities
- 3.2 the potential usefulness of the project/s to specific audience(s)
- 3.3 the creation and interpretation of new knowledge, through original research or other advanced scholarship, of a quality to satisfy peer review to extend the forefront of the professional area, and merit publication
- 3.4 advanced research and development capability and advanced project management skills which have been applied to their professional area of their study
- 3.5 advanced conceptual understanding, often of an interdisciplinary nature, that enables the candidate to evaluate:
  - critically current advanced professional knowledge in their area of study
  - methodologies, epistemologies, and develop advanced critiques of them and, where appropriate, propose new approaches
- 3.6 for the DProf by Public Works, the submission must be at the leading edge of professional practice. The term 'leading edge' is understood broadly and includes offering something not offered previously, seeing something in a new way, applying a known technique, method or model in a new way or in a new context, putting forward new arguments, or a new interpretation of an idea. Again this list is illustrative, and not intended to be exhaustive.

### 4 Standard of the Master of Professional Studies (MProf)

The standard of the MProf is that expected of a candidate who has engaged in work based learning, from taught and project sources, relating to organisational change and/or professional development. The candidate is required to produce a substantive project report and to orally present and defend the report.

The candidate must have demonstrated:

- 4.1 a systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current issues, much of which is at or informed by the forefront of their area of professional practice
- 4.2 research and development capability and project management skills applicable to the professional area of their study
- 4.3 conceptual understanding that enables the candidate to evaluate:
  - critically, current professional knowledge in their area of study
  - methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new approaches.

The public works submitted must be based on a single or predominant theme. Additionally, there must be coherence and continuity among the works. Provided that there is a permanent record of the work, and the work embodies a research and development process, and it is public, it will be acceptable for the degree. 'Public' is taken in its broadest sense as being in the public domain. Thus, any work to which the public has access, either directly or on application under the Freedom of Information Act, is understood to be in the public domain. In the case of works of art, publication is often by presentation or display. Examples include the preparation of computer programs, scholarly works, edited texts, specialist reports prepared for government departments and other public bodies, translations, collections of artefacts, videos, photographic records, musical scores and diagrammatic representations. This list is illustrative, and not intended to be exhaustive. The work must be available in a suitable form for scrutiny by advisers/consultants and examiners.

## 5 Context statement

- 5.1 For the DProf by Public Works, the general purpose of the context statement is to supplement work of intrinsic doctoral (level 8) standard in such a way as to create, overall, a DProf-equivalent submission.

In the case of the MProf by Public Works, the context statement must supplement the public works in such a way as to create, overall, an MProf-equivalent submission.

- 5.2 The context statement should be used creatively to supplement, or make explicit, or fill in the gaps left by the public works to ensure a DProf- or MProf-equivalent submission. The context statement should relate to the appropriate level descriptors (level 7 for MProf and level 8 for DProf) and the appropriate award standards for MProf and DProf (see 3 and 4 above). Within the three areas of the level descriptors – knowledge and understanding, cognitive skills and practical skills – there are essential components:
  - research and development capability

- knowledge
- practice expertise with products that lead to leading-edge practice that is capable of valuable impact.

Candidates will need to reflect on their careers to date. Reflections should be focused on those aspects of professional work and identity that are most relevant to the claim.

Candidates will need to think about external events, such as:

- key events, major achievements and leadership
- changes they have made in their organisation and/or professional field.

Candidates are also likely to need to take account of more personal factors, such as:

- motivation
- identifying major challenges in their work
- major influences upon their thinking
- main achievements over the course of their career
- identifying skills and knowledge they have developed
- how they have arrived at their current level of authority, influence, ability to be a change agent.

Evidence in the form of public works should be placed in appendices, and reference to the public works should be made throughout the context statement.

- 5.3 The context statement should be written in an evaluative rather than descriptive style. Candidates should link past learning with any more current understanding that has become important in the particular field. For example, if a candidate has a publication/work that is more than five years old but nevertheless important in its contribution to the field, a rationale should be given for the contribution that the original publication/work has made. The focus is on the application of specialist knowledge within their professional context (not just on areas of specialist knowledge per se). Statements should not just be about what capabilities have been developed but should illustrate, with examples, how capabilities have been used.
- 5.4 These elements are not the only ones that Advisers/Assessors may require as part of a context statement. The idea is to use the context statement in a flexible way so that the qualities and elements present in a professional research degree by project are also present in a professional research degree by public works. In this way, the submission taken as a whole (public works and context statement) is equivalent to a professional research degree by project. It is on the submission, taken as a whole, on which the candidate will be examined.

- 5.5 As the elements of the context statement will vary on a case-by-case basis, the word count of the context statement cannot be rigidly prescribed. The University's Research and Research Degrees Committee would normally expect 8,000 to 10,000 words for MProf and 15,000 to 20,000 words for DProf, but these word counts may be shortened or extended dependent on the circumstances of the case.

## 6 Application, interview and acceptance

6.1 A candidate shall apply for the MProf/DProf by Public Works by completing the appropriate application form and sending this, together with the current non-returnable application fee, to the University.

6.2 The Programme Administration Manager will send the applicant the following documents:

- application form
- degree regulations
- degree guidelines
- degree procedures
- current fees

6.3 The completed application form and non-refundable fee shall be returned to the DProf Administration Manager. The Administration Manager will forward the application to the programme leader, and at least one other research-active academic with knowledge of the theme of the research as directed by the programme leader. For candidates from partner institutions the nominated member of staff may be from the partner institution.

6.4 The programme leader and the nominated staff member will consider the application and decide whether it is of sufficient merit for the applicant to progress to the interview stage. (External advice may be taken where this is considered appropriate). Paperwork regarding the candidate's public works and status of the works is needed prior to the interview in order to take advice and make this decision.

6.5 In cases where the outcome of the assessment is positive, the candidate shall be interviewed by two members of the DProf programme team. For candidates from partner institutions this will include a programme team member from the partner institution. In some cases, the interview may be conducted by telephone, video or weblink. This will normally be where the candidate is based abroad. The outcomes of the assessment of all

applications received, whether positive or otherwise, shall be communicated to the applicants in writing.

- 6.6 Prior to the interview candidates should send examples of their public works so that the quality, scope, and level of these can be considered. The interviewers will need to satisfy themselves that there is a single or predominant theme to the works and that there is coherence, continuity and convergence among the works. For an application for the degree of DProf by Public Works, the interviewers will need to satisfy themselves that the works are of intrinsic doctoral (level 8) standard. The nature and length of the context statement should be discussed with the candidate in the light of the public works. If it appears that the works are not of intrinsic doctoral (level 8) standard, the option of an MProf by Public Works should be discussed with the candidate.
- 6.7 In cases where works are co-authored, the candidate should send prior to the interview the signed statement from the co-author of each work identifying the respective contributions of both authors. In the case of works of art, the signed statement should be signed by the collaborators.
- 6.8 In cases where the public work is awaiting publication, the candidate should bring to the interview a signed letter from the publisher stating that the work has been accepted for publication and the expected date of publication. In the case of works of art, or other material that is not 'published' in the traditional sense but placed in the public domain, there should be an equivalent signed letter.
- 6.9 Within reasonable time following the interview, the candidate will be informed in writing whether or not the programme team has accepted them to prepare for submission for the degree. Where there is an acceptance, the letter will state the name and contact details of the Adviser.
- 6.10 In the event that an applicant is rejected by the programme team, it will be the responsibility of the programme leader to write to the applicant, within reasonable time, a letter of rejection clearly stating the reasons why the application has been rejected. A copy of this letter must be retained by the Programme Administration Manager.

## 7 Enrolment and progression

- 7.1 Following receipt of the letter of acceptance, the candidate should enrol immediately for the degree and pay the current fee.

**Note** Where the work is not submitted by the end of one year, a proportion of the second-year fee will become payable. The proportion will depend on when the work is submitted.

- 7.2 Following enrolment, the Adviser will work with the candidate towards the submission process. This includes assisting the candidate in selecting the public works submitted for the degree, in formulating the scheme and rationale of the context statement, and advising on any further reading. A Consultant(s) will also provide guidance on the selection of public works and context statement.
- 7.3 At the end of the first study period the candidate, in consultation with the Adviser, should be satisfied that the submission taken as a whole (that is, the public works together with the context statement) will be likely to be considered the equivalent in quality to the DProf (or MProf, as appropriate) the documentation should be submitted as satisfactory progression.
- 7.4 The progression process will normally be carried out informally with the Adviser, Consultant(s) and candidate coming to agreement that the submission is progressing to satisfactory completion. Exceptionally, the Adviser may require a progression panel. Also, no later than six months after enrolment, the programme assessment board will check progression and may require a progression panel that shall ensure the quality of the submission for the proposed degree, with particular regard to the content, rationale, and length of the context statement, and its relation to the public works.
- 7.5 Progression panels will comprise the Adviser and at least one independent member with experience of assessment at the appropriate level. The panel will meet with the candidate to discuss the submission (public works and context statement) and subsequently write a joint report, usually identifying some requirements to be met before registration can take place. They will give a copy of their report to the Programme Administration Manager for forwarding to the Adviser and the candidate. The revised work, for example, the amended draft context statement and/or public works, must be approved by the panel before progression on the current programme can continue. The panel shall also consider, and has the right to determine, whether the candidate should be assessed for the degree of DProf or MProf by Public Works.
- 7.6 If a progression panel has been convened, once the work is approved, the Programme Administration Manager will send a letter to the candidate and Adviser.

## 8 Preparation for submission

- 8.1 The appropriate MProf/DProf programme leader shall appoint an Adviser to prepare the candidate for submission. This shall consist of:
- assisting the candidate in selecting the public works for the degree
  - formulating the structure and rationale of the context statement
  - advising on any further reading.

The Adviser shall also advise the candidate on whether they should be examined for the degree of MProf by Public Works or DProf by Public Works.

**Note** the final decision of submission rests with the candidate.

8.2 The Adviser appointed shall be experienced in advising candidates for professional doctorates by project, or shall have supervised previously candidates for research degrees by published works. Adequate experience shall normally be taken as a minimum of one research degree (PhD or DProf) *to completion* by either route. Supervision shall be at the appropriate level of experience at:

- MPhil/MProf- or PhD/DProf-level for the MProf by Public Works
- PhD/DProf level for the DProf by Public Works.

For candidates from partner institutions the Adviser will be from the partner institution. They will be trained by the partner institution in a comparable way to the University's training and the University's training will be made available to partner staff acting as academic Advisers.

8.3 Where a candidate fails to make progress towards submission that is judged satisfactory by the Adviser(s), the Chair of the Programme Assessment Board shall advise the candidate of this fact in writing, and identify a reasonable timescale (not normally less than four months) for improvements to be made. Should the progress be judged insufficient at the end of the stated period, the Assessment Board may require either that the candidate transfer to a different degree (MProf by Public Works) or withdraw.

## 9 Public works in non-written form

9.1 The University shall also consider works for the degrees of MProf and DProf by Public Works in non-written form. These may include creative works that have been published by presentation or display, scholarly editions, software and research reports, or translations that embody research. The work must be available in a suitable form for perusal by Advisers/Consultants and examiners.

9.2 Work in non-written form shall be the core work, constituting the point of reference and principal mode of enquiry, but supplemented by a shorter submission of written work as well as the context statement or where no previous written work at an appropriate level exists an expanded context statement (25,000 to 30,000 words). The

public written work or expanded context statement shall constitute a reasoned commentary on the other forms.

9.3 The combined works and the context statement shall constitute the equivalent of a complete MProf or DProf, as relevant.

9.4 The acceptance of forms of work other than a conventional set of published works does not imply any relaxation in the academic standards for the award concerned.

## 10 Examiners

10.1 When the Adviser is satisfied that the candidate is prepared for the examination, examination arrangements shall be proposed to research and research degrees committee via the University Research and Business Office.

10.2 There shall be two external examiners who shall **not**:

- currently hold any appointment of the University, of the partner institution or of an associated institution
- have been a co-author of any of the works on which the candidate's application is based
- be selected from an institution where the candidate is currently employed or has been employed within the last three years.

Additionally there will be an independent internal examiner. For collaborative provision the internal examiners will be from the partner institution. The independent internal examiner shall have had no supervisory or advisory contact with the candidate during the period of registration.

10.3 The oral examination shall have an independent Chair.

## 11 Submission of public works for examination

11.1 The candidate shall submit to the Programme Administration Manager, appropriately bound, all the public works on which the application is based. Where journal articles or other written forms of work form the main body of the submission, these should be bound in behind the context statement. The contents page should give details of all the articles that are included.

11.2 Where the body of written work is supplemented by work in another form, a record of that work shall also be submitted in appropriate form(s), such as video or audio

recordings, CD, or any appropriate medium. Three copies of this record shall be submitted.

- 11.3 One complete set of works and a bound context statement for which the degree was awarded should be submitted to the IWBL/RBO. In addition two electronic submissions of the context statement are required, one for storage in the University's electronic repository (see [appendix 2](#)) and one for the IWBL/School. This submission should ideally be provided on CD-Rom to the Programme Administration Manager.

## 12 Previous submission of works

12.1 The candidate shall declare if any of the works on which the application is based have formed part of the submission for any other degree awarded to the candidate. Works submitted for another degree awarded to the candidate shall not form a substantial part of the candidate's submission for the award of either the degree of MProf or DProf by Public Works.

## 13 Examination

13.1 The candidate shall be orally examined by presentation and viva voce. The examination board shall be composed of a Chair and examiners duly appointed by the University's Research and Research Degrees Committee. Observers shall be present only with the agreement of the candidate and the examiners. The examination shall be concerned with the content of the works submitted and any matters the examiners deem to be related thereto.

13.2 In examining the candidate for the degree of MProf or DProf by Public Works, the examiners shall determine whether the submission fulfils the standard for this degree.

13.3 Prior to the oral examination, each examiner shall be required to complete, independently and without prior consultation, a preliminary report form on the published works and context statement and to submit this to the Programme Administration Manager. This shall also apply in the case of partner institution report forms.

## 14 Examination arrangements

14.1 It is the responsibility of the Adviser to propose examination arrangements for the candidate. Examination arrangements should be approved internally in the IWBL/School before being forwarded to the University Research and Business

- Office (RBO) for final approval. For the examination of candidates from partner institutions, the proposal will be routed via the appropriate school or IWBL. The Chair for such examinations will always be from the University.
- 14.2 The RBO will inform the Programme Administration Manager once examination arrangements have been approved by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research and Enterprise.
  - 14.3 The Programme Administration Manager can then arrange the date, time, and venue for the examination, and send the submission (publications and context statement) to the examiners.
  - 14.4 After the oral examination, the Programme Administration Manager will send to the RBO the joint report form (the 'B' form) and, where revisions are required by the exam board, the revisions form (the E-revs form).
  - 14.5 Where there are no revisions required to the context statement, the Chair's action will be taken, and the RBO will make the award of DProf by Public Works (or MProf by Public Works, as appropriate) to the candidate.
  - 14.6 Where the examination board requires revisions, the candidate should submit three copies of the revised work to the Programme Administration Manager.
  - 14.7 The Programme Administration Manager will send the revised work to the examiners and subsequently receive revised reports from them.
  - 14.8 On receipt of the report(s) from the examiner(s), the Programme Administration Manager will gain the approval of the Chair of the viva voce panel and forward the recommendation to the RBO. The RBO will arrange for the Chair's action on behalf of the University's Research and Research Degrees Committee (RRDC), and inform the candidate in writing of the outcome.

## 15 Examiner's report

15.1 After the examination, the examiners shall report on the works submitted and on the oral examination. They shall preferably present a joint report but are at liberty to present separate ones if they so wish. They shall jointly make one of the following recommendations to the University's Research and Research Degrees Committee:

- the degree be awarded
- the degree be awarded subject to revisions to the context statement or other revisions required by the examiners
- the degree not be awarded
- or, in the case of a DProf by Public Works examination, the candidate be awarded the degree of MProf by Public Works.

The recommendation of the examiners shall be considered by the Research and Research degrees Committee.

15.2 If the committee agrees that the degree should be awarded, its recommendation shall be considered by the Academic Board. If the examiners are unable to agree on a recommendation, the Research and Research Degrees Committee shall appoint an additional external examiner and shall consider the published works, the context statement, and the reports of all the examiners.

15.3 In cases where it is recommended that the degree be awarded subject to revisions to the context statement, the revisions shall be approved by all examiners indicated on the oral recommendations form prior to consideration by Research and Research Degrees Committee.

15.4 A candidate to whom the degree is not awarded may reapply at any time, provided that such an application includes substantial additional public works and a revised context statement.

15.5 A candidate to whom the degree of MProf by Public Works is awarded may reapply for the degree of DProf by Public Works provided that such an application includes substantial additional public works and a revised context statement or may apply to study for a DProf by project (see [DProf regulations](#)).

## 16 Disposal of works submitted

16.1 The disposal of the copies of the submission shall be at the discretion of the University but normally two of the copies shall be returned to the candidate, if specifically requested.

16.2 If the degree be awarded, one copy of the submission including, where appropriate, any forms of work other than conventionally written material shall be retained in the University library, and one copy will be retained by the Institute for Work Based Learning/School.

16.3 In addition, an electronic submission of the context statement is required for storage in the University's electronic repository. This submission can be made either on CD-Rom or sent as a Word file attachment to an email to the programme administration manager.

## 17 Award

17.1 The degree shall be awarded to a successful candidate by the Academic Board. The date of the award shall be the date on which the Research and Research Degrees Committee approves the award.

17.2 The RBO will arrange for the printing and forwarding to the successful candidate the degree certificate, and for the candidate to be invited to the next graduation ceremony.

## 18 Candidates in debt

18.1 No candidate shall be entitled to the award of a degree unless all fees and any other sums due to the University have been paid, and the rightful property of the University returned.

## 19 Appeal

19.1 A candidate who, as a result of the recommendation of the examiners, has not been awarded the degree and who wishes to appeal against this decision should consult the **University regulations, section G**, at

[www.24-7.mdx.ac.uk/assess/regs.htm](http://www.24-7.mdx.ac.uk/assess/regs.htm)

## Appendix 1

# Presentation and binding of projects submitted for examination

### Titles, headings, and numberings

- If chapters are used, give each one a title and number.
- Headings within chapters may help the reader to perceive the structure and flow of the analysis and argument. Principal sections within a chapter may be numbered, for example, 1.1, 1.2 but smaller subdivisions such as 1.1.1 are to be avoided.

### Tables, diagrams, graphs

- Place any tables, diagrams and graphs as close as possible to the relevant point in the text. Where more than four or five are used in the document, it is best to collate them in the appendices.
- Use sequential numbering, and label tables as 'Table 1, 2, 3...' and diagrams and graphs as 'Figure 1, 2, 3...'. Remember to provide a descriptive heading to help the reader.

### References, footnotes, and bibliography

- There are details of the reference style used by the Institute for Work Based Learning/School in Appendix 2 of the MProf/DProf by Public Works Handbook
- Collate all references made within the text in a bibliography at the end of the text.
- Bibliographies should follow the version of the Harvard system as described in [appendix 2](#) of the [MProf/DProf by Public Works candidate handbook](#).
- Use footnotes to add supporting information to what is in the main body of the text, without distracting the reader from the flow and direction of the main text. Use sequential numbering (1, 2, 3).

## Appendices

- Use these for illustrative and supportive material referred to in the text.
- A brief annotation may be appropriate to indicate its significance and relevance to points being made in the text.
- throughout.
- Start each chapter on a new page.
- Allow a minimum of 15mm for margins, except for the final project, where you should leave not less than 40mm on the left-hand margin to allow for binding.

## Word count

- Remember to include a word count at the end of the text; it should exclude footnotes, bibliography and appendices. The word counts for projects are given in the module narratives.

## Identification and presentation

All submissions must be bound by an appropriate means for examination, for example, a ringbinder or soft bound. On the front cover must be stated:

- candidate's name
- student number
- module code
- date of submission
- for projects, the project title.

## Appendix 2

### Presentation and binding requirements for the final format (post-examination) - IWBL candidates only

- One complete set of the works and a bound copy of the context statement should be submitted to IWBL, along with two electronic copies of the context statement. The copies in both formats shall become the property of the University. Copyright in the project(s) shall normally be vested in the candidate. The exceptions are set out in the Policy Statement *Intellectual Property Rights: Students*. The Policy Statement also explains ownership in respect of other forms of Intellectual Property which may arise from the project(s) undertaken.
- The following requirements shall be adhered to in the format of the bound project. Where a candidate desires fuller guidance, reference may be made to the British Standards Institution specification BS 4821 (1990). Where the University's regulations differ from BS 4821 in points of detail, a candidate may follow either.
  - Projects should normally be in A4 format; permission may be given for a project to be submitted in another format where it is satisfied that the contents of the project can be better expressed in that format; a candidate using a format larger than A4 should note that the production of microfiche copies and full-size enlargement may not be feasible.
  - Copies of the project shall be presented in a permanent and legible form either in typescript or print; where copies are produced by photocopying processes, these shall be of a permanent nature; where word processor and printing devices are used, the printer shall be capable of producing text of a satisfactory quality; the size of character used in the main text, including displayed matter and notes, shall not be less than 2.0mm for capitals and 1.5mm for x-height (that is, height of lower case).
  - The thesis shall be printed on the recto side of the page only; the paper shall be white and within the range 70 gsm to 100 gsm.
  - 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.
  - Double or 1.5-line spacing shall be used in the typescript except for indented quotations or footnotes where single spacing may be used.
  - Pages shall be numbered consecutively through the main text including photographs and/or diagrams included as whole pages.

- The title page shall give the following information:
  - full title of the project
  - full name of the author
  - that the degree is awarded by the University
  - the award for which the thesis is submitted in partial fulfilment of its requirements
  - identity of any collaborating establishment/s
  - month and year of submission.

## Binding

Copy should be bound in black with gold lettering as follows:

- Binding shall be of a fixed type so that leaves cannot be removed or replaced
- Front and rear boards shall have sufficient rigidity to support the weight of the work when standing upright
- In at least 24pt type the outside front board shall bear the title of the work, the name and initials of the candidate, the qualification, and the year of submission; the same information (excluding the title of the work) shall be shown on the spine of the work, reading downwards.

The usual title page layout is shown in the example below.



## Appendix 3

# University appeal regulations and procedures 2010/11

### Appeals procedure for research degree candidates

- 3.1 Research degree candidates have the right to appeal to the academic board against decisions taken by the research and research degrees committee upon the recommendations made by the examiners. This right extends to candidates of the University and of partner institutions registered for the degrees of PhD, MPhil, or MA (by research), MSc (by research), LL.M (by research), or MTh; PhD by Public Works or MPhil by Public Works; also to candidates who have progressed to Part 2 (the research project) of an MProf or DProf degree, or its special validated pathways; or for those registered for the MProf by Public Works, the DProf by Public Works, or its special validated pathways.

An appeal against a particular decision may only be based on the grounds that there:

- were circumstances affecting the candidate's performance of which the examiners were not aware at the viva voce examination and which the candidate, for good reasons, could not divulge at the time (including the existence of exceptional circumstances which could not have been known to the candidate prior to the submission of the thesis)
  - is evidence of a procedural irregularity in the conduct of the examination (including administrative error) of such a nature as to cause doubt as to whether the result might have been different had there not been such irregularity
  - is evidence of unfair or improper assessment on the part of one or more of the examiners.
- 3.2 Candidates may not challenge the academic judgement of the examiners and appeals made on this basis will be rejected.
- 3.3 Inadequacy of supervision or any other administrative procedure at any stage before the submission of the thesis should, in the absence of exceptional circumstances, have been dealt with under the complaints and grievance procedure and under the University student charter.
- 3.4 A candidate wishing to appeal should give notice of their request for a review (intention to appeal) within one month of receiving the written decision of the Research and Research Degrees Committee of the outcome of the examination or re-examination.

- 3.5 Candidates must submit a written case for the review within a further month from the date of giving notice of the intention to appeal.
- 3.6 Written notice of the intention to appeal and the written case for review should be submitted to the Academic Registrar. The Academic Registrar will be responsible for interpreting and applying University regulations as they apply to an appeal by a research degree candidate.
- 3.7 The procedure for considering an appeal shall be as described below.
- 3.7.1 An appeal panel shall be established consisting of:
- the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic or nominee who shall chair the panel
  - at least two senior staff experienced in research degree supervision and examining who are not members of Research and Research Degrees Committee, who shall be appointed by the Vice-Chancellor in his role as Chair of the Academic Board
  - a staff member of the Research & Business Office (Secretary).
- 3.7.2 Members of the panel shall have had no previous involvement in the case. Previous involvement is defined as having supervised, advised, or counselled the candidate about the project or advised or counselled the supervisors about matters pertaining to the project. Consideration of the initial registration and/or MProf/DProf approval panels etc of a candidate by a member of a research and research degrees committee or a school/IWBL Research Committee does *not* constitute involvement.
- 3.7.3 The review panel shall consider the evidence which shall include:
- candidate's written case
  - a report prepared by the Academic Registrar
  - examiners' preliminary and final reports
  - candidate's thesis.
- 3.8 The candidate shall have the right to be heard in person and to speak to their written case. They may be accompanied by a person of their choice, but may not seek legal representation at a hearing of the panel.
- 3.9 The appeal panel shall have the power to invite the examiners to present an oral or written report to the panel and shall normally do so.
- 3.10 The appeal panel shall have the power to question any member of the University staff, the candidate's external supervisor/s (if any) and the internal and external examiners.
- 3.11 Candidates shall receive a written statement of the reasons for failure prepared by examiners after the examination.
- 3.12 The review panel shall examine the case presented by the candidate, ensure that it falls within the remit of the University regulations and establish whether there is a *prima facie* case as detailed in paragraph 3.1 above. It shall establish this principally by enquiring whether the final decision by the examiners was fair and sound.

- 3.13 The examiners shall be informed that an appeal has been made and told that the panel may find it necessary to approach them on issues raised by the candidate.
- 3.14 The examiners shall be assured that issues to be considered by the panel will be confined to those which fall within the scope of the University's research degree appeals regulations.
- 3.15 The panel may need to meet on several occasions before determining its recommendations to research and research degrees committee.
- 3.16 The examiners shall be informed of the outcome of the panel's deliberations and of the decision of Research and Research Degrees Committee.
- 3.17 The appeal review panel shall make one of the following recommendations:
- that the appeal be rejected by the Research and Research Degrees Committee
  - that Research and Research Degrees Committee, under powers delegated by the Academic Board, shall invite the original examiners to reconsider their decision in accordance with approved regulations and procedures
  - that the Research and Research Degrees Committee appoint new examiners to conduct the examination as if for the first time.

The panel has no powers to recommend that the original recommendation of the examiners be set aside other than in respect of 3.1 above.

- 3.18 The Research and Research Degrees Committee or the Chair of the Research and Research Degrees Committee shall receive the recommendations of the review panel and take appropriate action.
- 3.19 The **Research & Business Office** shall communicate the decision of the Research and Research Degrees Committee to the candidate setting out the reasons for the decision and informing the candidate that the appeals procedure of the University has been completed.
- 3.20 Should the candidate wish to take the matter externally, to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA), they must:
- Step 1** View their appeal file (by contacting the Secretary to the Research and Research Degrees Committee, Middlesex University Research and Business Office)
- Step 2** Put any concerns about the appeal outcome, or its conduct, or the appeals procedures in writing to the secretary of the research and research degrees committee. The candidate shall receive a full written response which includes confirmation that the internal procedures of the University have been completed.
- 3.21 Within three months of receiving notification that the internal procedures of the University have been completed, the candidate may approach the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA), enclosing a copy of the final decision of the University and stating reasons for redress.



The OIA's address is:  
3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, King's Reach  
38-50 King's Road  
Reading  
RG1 3AA



Enquiries may be sent to [enquiries@oiahe.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@oiahe.org.uk) or via the website at

[www.oiahe.org.uk](http://www.oiahe.org.uk)

For any further information on research degrees and regulations at Middlesex University, please visit



[www.24-7.mdx.ac.uk/admin/researchinfo.htm](http://www.24-7.mdx.ac.uk/admin/researchinfo.htm)

## Appendix 4

# Complaints and grievance procedures

### 4.1 Introduction

These procedures seek to ensure that complaints against the University made by students are treated seriously and, if found to be valid, are acted upon to ensure that the students' interests are protected as far as it is possible for the University to do so.

Specific procedures exist already for dealing with the following student complaints. These are:

- appeals against examination decisions of the University research and research degrees committee
- alleged harassment
- alleged inequality of opportunity
- complaints which fall within the remit of the University's student disciplinary procedures.

**Note** Complaints against Middlesex University Students' Union are dealt with by the union.

The procedures detailed below are designed for all other forms of student complaints which do not fall within one of the above procedures. They include, but are not limited to, inadequate facilities for academic study, or inadequate supervision (such as the late return of work, or insufficient supervisory meetings or insufficient guidance to permit expected progress) where these are persistent and cannot be resolved through simpler procedures. These procedures also cover termination by a School/Institute for Work Based Learning of a student's registration for a research degree.

### 4.2 Principles which underpin the general student complaints procedures

The guiding principles of these procedures are that complaints shall be:

- treated seriously and with fairness

- dealt with quickly, simply and at a level of the School/IWBL, campus or service as far as is possible
- treated consistently across the University
- subject to the principles of natural justice
- progressed through two stages – an informal and, if necessary, a formal stage
- dealt with and resolved wherever possible, at the informal stage, and shall be
- without prejudice to a student's or group of students' right to pursue legal remedies outside the University.

## 4.3 Procedures

Reference to the following complaints procedures should be necessary only in exceptional circumstances since most complaints, other than those related to persistent problems, should be resolved informally between student and director of studies/academic Adviser and/or other members of the advisory team.

### 4.3.1 Informal stage 1

In the first instance, students who wish to make a complaint shall discuss it with their School/IWBL Associate Dean (Research) who will advise whether or not the complaint is best progressed through:

- one of the alternative procedures set out in paragraph 1.2 or
- these general complaints procedures.

Assuming it is agreed that the complaint shall be progressed through these general procedures, the school/IWBL senior staff member responsible for complaints consulted shall discuss the complaint fully with the student, and anyone else involved, to see if it can be resolved informally. This may involve referral of the complaint to a third party who shall be a nominee of the School/IWBL Associate Dean (Research). The outcome of complaints dealt with informally should be briefly documented. Normally, complaints handled through informal stage 1 shall be dealt with within, at most, 10 working days. If the complaint directly involves the School/IWBL Associate Dean (Research), it shall proceed directly to informal stage 2.

### 4.3.2 Informal stage 2

If the student is dissatisfied with the result of informal stage 1, or if the complaint directly involves the School/IWBL, the complaint shall be sent in writing to the academic director

responsible for the programme to which the student is formally aligned. The written complaint shall summarize the relevant background to, and fact of, the case and shall state the outcome of informal stage 1. An annexe shall be provided with copies of papers related to informal stage 1. If the complaint directly involves the academic director of the programme, it shall proceed directly to the formal stage. The director to whom the complaint is referred shall investigate the complaint fully and shall seek to achieve an informal resolution of the problem(s), either by correspondence or discussion.

### 4.3.3 Formal stage

If a student is dissatisfied with the result of the two informal stages, they shall proceed to the formal stage. The complaint shall be put in writing to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research and Enterprise. The written complaint shall summarise the relevant background to, and facts of, the case and shall state the outcomes of informal stages 1 and 2 and give the reasons why they are dissatisfied with these outcomes. An annexe shall be provided with copies of papers related to informal stages 1 and 2. The deputy Vice-chancellor Research and Enterprise shall normally:

- acknowledge receipt of the written complaint within three working days
- advise in writing and within three working days, any member(s) of staff or students involved that a formal complaint has been received
- consider the evidence, written or otherwise, and, if necessary, hold such discussions with the complainant and any other persons deemed appropriate in order to fully investigate the complaint.

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research and Enterprise, having fully investigated the complaint over a period not normally exceeding 10 working days from its receipt, shall decide whether:

- the complaint should be progressed through other procedures (eg disciplinary procedures or other procedures indicated in paragraph 1.2) in which case the complaint shall be terminated at this stage
- there is justification for the complaint
- there is no justification for the complaint.

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research and Enterprise shall:

- make their decision known in writing to the student and to members of staff involved
- seek to resolve any justifiable complaint through recommendations which all parties involved in the complaint shall be invited to accept

- if the recommendations are agreed, ensure that they are implemented in full within the agreed time period.

#### 4.3.4 Appeal

If the student is not satisfied with the decision at the conclusion of the formal stage or if the recommendations made at this stage are not implemented, they may appeal to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic. The student shall submit the appeal in writing within 10 working days of receiving the outcome of the formal stage. The written appeal shall summarize the relevant background to, and facts of, the case and state the outcomes of both informal stages and of the formal stage. An annexe shall be provided with copies of papers related to all these stages.

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic receiving the appeal shall normally:

- acknowledge its receipt within three working days
- decide to enforce the implementation of the recommendations made at the end of the formal stage
- dismiss the case, giving reasons in writing
- seek agreement to an alternative set of recommendations
- determine whether there are sufficient grounds to convene a research student complaint panel and, if so, shall
- establish a research student complaint panel to hear the appeal.

In such cases the decision of the complaint panel shall be final.

#### 4.3.5 Complaints panel

The research student complaints panel shall involve four persons:

- Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic who shall chair the panel

A member of the University's Research and Research Degrees Committee who is not from the school/IWBL about which the complaint is being made and who has had no connection with the student at any time

- student representative appointed by the students' Union.
- Academic Registrar (Secretary).

Rights of the parties

- i) The candidate shall have the right to be heard in person and to speak their written case to the panel.

- ii) Staff about whom the complaint is being made shall have the right to be heard in person and to speak their written case to the panel.
- iii) The student making the complaint and the staff member(s) about whom the complaint is being made may be accompanied by a person of their choosing, but may not seek legal representation at the hearing.
- iv) The complaints panel shall have the right to question any member of the University staff including the student's Advisers and the School/IWBL Associate Dean (Research).
- v) The student and staff members involved directly in the complaint and persons accompanying them shall be permitted to question any persons giving evidence to the meeting.
- vi) The student and staff members shall have the right to introduce documents to the panel (see Procedures in preparation, ii below).

#### Procedures in preparation for the hearing

- i) The Academic Registrar shall inform the student and academic staff concerned (including any such staff to be called as witnesses) in writing of the date, time and venue of the hearing. This shall normally be done no less than 15 working days prior to the hearing.
- ii) Written statements and other documentation to be copied for the hearing, submitted by the student or academic staff (see Rights of the parties, vi) shall be sent to the Academic Registrar normally within five working days of the date of the letter giving details the hearing (see i above).
- iii) The Academic Registrar shall ensure that all such statements and documentation are circulated no less than five working days to the other party and to all members of the panel.
- iv) If the student or staff member(s) involved intend to be accompanied (see Rights of the parties, iii), the name and address of the accompanying person(s) shall be notified to the Academic Registrar no less than 24 hours prior to the hearing.

#### Conduct of the panel

The panel shall:

- meet in private

- initially decide and then inform all parties concerned how it will conduct the hearing subject to the procedures being consistent with the principles of these general complaints procedures and of these procedural rules
- establish the exact nature of the complaint, establish the facts as far as it is possible to do so, consider the facts and determine its decision.

A written report of the hearing shall be made by the Academic Registrar.

#### Outcome

The academic registrar shall:

- send the report of the hearing to the Dean of School/Institute for Work Based Learning, and school/IWBL Associate Dean (Research).
- communicate the decision of the complaints panel to the candidate setting out the reasons for the decision.

The Dean of School/Institute for Work Based Learning shall write a report identifying the action taken by the School/IWBL, normally within six weeks from the date of the complaints panel hearing, for consideration by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic. If the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic is convinced by the complainant that the outcome has not been satisfactorily responded to, the former shall take whatever actions are necessary to ensure the outcomes are complied with within a minimal period. The Academic Registrar shall then write to the student stating that the internal procedures of the University have been completed.

## 4.4 Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education

Should the student wish to take the matter externally, to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA), they must:

**Step 1** view their complaints file (by contacting the secretary of the research and research degrees committee).

**Step 2** put any concern about the outcome, the conduct of the procedures, or the procedures themselves in writing to the secretary of the research and research degrees committee. The student shall receive a full written response which includes confirmation that the internal procedures of the University have been completed.

Within three months of receiving notification that the internal procedures of the University have been completed, the student may approach the OIA enclosing a copy of the final decision of the University and stating reasons for seeking redress.



The OIA's address is:  
3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, King's Reach  
30-50 King's Road  
Reading  
RG1 3AA

Email enquiries may be sent to [enquiries@oiahe.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@oiahe.org.uk) or via the website at

[www.oiahe.org.uk](http://www.oiahe.org.uk)

## 4.5 Notes

In these procedures:

- A reference to a research student is taken to mean any student registered for the degree of PhD, MPhil, or MA (by research), MSc (by research), LLM (by research), or MTh; PhD by Public Works or MPhil by Public Works; also to candidates who have progressed to Part 2 (the research project) of an MProf or DProf degree, or its special validated pathways; or for those registered for the MProf by Public Works, the DProf by Public Works, or its special validated pathways, whether on a full- or part-time basis, self-funded, funded by Middlesex University or by an external body, and includes members of University staff registered for a research degree in their capacity as students
- In the absence (eg vacation or illness) of the person holding a named post in the procedures, the person deputising for them during the time of their absence shall substitute. In cases when the complaint involves the nominated deputy, a member of the executive shall be consulted and shall determine who shall be responsible for handling the complaint.

### 4.5.1 Interpretation

- The Academic Registrar is responsible for interpreting these procedures and their decision shall be final except in cases where the interpretation involves a complaint against the Academic Registrar or University Research and Business Office in which case interpretation of the

procedures shall be the responsibility of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research and Enterprise.

- 'Working day' refers to a day on which the University is normally open; it does not include Saturday, Sunday, bank holidays, or other designated periods of closure outside the academic terms.

## Appendix 5 Electronic repository form



### Middlesex University Research Repository Agreement

Surname:

First name(s):

Thesis/Dissertation/Research Project Title:

Degree:

Date of Award:

School:

#### Copyright Declaration

In accordance with the Research Degree Regulations, I am depositing an electronic version of my thesis/dissertation/research project (hereafter referred to as the “Work”) in the Middlesex University Research Repository. I retain all rights in the Work in its present version and in any future versions. I am free to publish the Work in its present version, or future versions, elsewhere and in any format.

The right granted to Middlesex University Research Repository is non-exclusive, and royalty-free.

I agree that the administrators of Middlesex University Research Repository, or any third party with whom Middlesex University Research Repository has an agreement may, without changing content, migrate the Work to any medium or format for the purpose of future preservation and accessibility.

Where third party content is included in the Work, I have obtained documented permission from the rights owners to include the material with acknowledgement and grant these rights.

### Deposit in Middlesex University Research Repository

I understand that Works deposited in Middlesex University Research Repository will be accessible to a wide variety of people and institutions - including automated agents - via the World Wide Web. An electronic copy of my Work may also be included in the British Library Electronic Theses On-line System (EThOS) under the same copyright terms and conditions as given in the section on copyright above. Deposit will enable accessibility of my Work essentially for the purposes of non-commercial research, private study, criticism, review, news reporting, illustration for teaching and/or other educational purposes. It may also be searched and copied by text mining and plagiarism detection software.

I agree as follows:

1. That I am the author of the Work and have the authority to make this agreement and to hereby give administrators of Middlesex University Research Repository the right to make available the Work in the way described above.
2. That the digital version of the Work I am supplying is as approved by the examiners and University at the time of the award of my degree.
3. That I have exercised reasonable care to ensure that the Work is original and does not, to the best of my knowledge, infringe any third party copyright or other Intellectual Property right, or contain any confidential material (If in doubt, contact the Research and Business Office (ext 5951)).
4. The administrators of Middlesex University Research Repository do not hold any obligation to take legal action on my behalf, or on behalf of any other rights holders, in the event of breach of copyright or any other Intellectual Property rights, or any other right, in the material deposited.

Signature:

Date

Once the signed and dated, please return the completed form to the Research and Business Office (Conferments Section). Keep a copy for your own records.

N.B. If you wish to restrict access to your work please complete and attach the sections below:

#### A. Withholding Work from the Repository

In certain cases, your Work may include substantial subsidiary material owned by third-party copyright holders. This may occur, for example, where you have already published a journal article or the like (the copyright of which is now owned by its publisher) and some of this is, with the agreement of your supervisors, included within the main text or as an appendix within your Work. Or, it may occur where you have used photographs or other types of image to illustrate your work which is third-party owned, and consent for use has not yet been obtained from the copyright owner. In cases like these, you will not be able to sign this form and have your Work added to the Repository until you have obtained the agreement of the copyright owner. It may, however, be possible to have certain pages (those that contain the third-party copyright material) withheld from the Repository and the rest of your Work included in the Repository.

It may also be necessary to withhold your Work from the Repository where you and your supervisors are planning to apply for a patent, registered design or other form of Intellectual Property for which confidentiality is required. In such cases, your supervisory team will have applied for non-disclosure of your Work to the University's Research and Research Degrees Committee for a maximum period of two years.

I wish to withhold access to my Work for reasons specified on the attached form:

Signature:

Date:

N.B Please complete the '[Access Restriction Request Form](#)' below and attach before returning.

#### B. Withdrawing Work from the Repository

You should also note that it is easy to contact Middlesex University Learning Resources which operates the Middlesex University Research Repository to get your Work (or a part of your Work) removed from the Repository. You may need to do this where you decide later to publish all or a part of your Work, and a condition of publication is that you transfer your copyright in the Work to the publisher. In case of part publication of the Work, you may decide to withdraw from the Repository only those parts that are to be published. In cases of full withdrawal of the Work, the University will retain the bibliographic record and the abstract/summary of the Work. To ensure withdrawal from the British Library's EthOS system, you will need to contact them separately. They use the same system of retaining the bibliographic record and abstract/summary.

Access Restriction requested for reasons given below:

The Work contains copyright material which belongs to a third party and the gaining of approval to

publish the material electronically:

has been declined by the Copyright Owner/s

would be unduly onerous or expensive

and removal of the material would compromise the thesis

The Work contains content which it is proposed will be the subject of a patent application, registered design

application, or other commercial exploitation, and confidentiality is required.

I am seeking to publish the Work in the near future.

Other (please specify)

In normal circumstances any E-print to which access has been restricted will be made available after two years (this does not apply to Works restricted for reasons of Copyright or protection under other Statutory exemptions). Candidates who believe access to their Work should be restricted for more than two years should state their reason here:

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To be completed by candidate

I confirm that the information I have given on this form is complete and accurate
Signed (Author):
Print Name:
E-mail address:
Date:

To be completed by your primary Director of Studies or Academic Supervisor

I confirm that I agree with the decision indicated on the form by the author of the Work with respect to access to the Work
Signature (Supervisor):
Print Name:
Date:

Please return the completed document to the Research and Business Office (Conferments Section) keeping a copy for your own records.