



## **RESEARCH DEGREE REGULATIONS**

**Doctor of Philosophy**

**Doctor of Philosophy by Public Works**

**Doctor of Engineering**

**Master of Philosophy**

**Master of Philosophy by Public Works**

**Master of Arts (by Research)**

**Master of Science (by Research)**

**Master of Laws (by Research)**

**And**

**Doctor of Laws**

**Doctor of Letters**

**Doctor of Science**

**Doctor of Technology**

*Revised: February 2011*

**MIDDLESEX UNIVERSITY**  
**RESEARCH DEGREE REGULATIONS**  
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# STANDARDS FOR RESEARCH DEGREES

## **Master of Arts (by Research); Master of Science (by Research); Master of Laws (by Research)**

The standard of the MA/MSc (by research) is that expected of a candidate who has undertaken a research programme, demonstrated knowledge and understanding of existing scholarship or research in the field specified by the thesis title, and presented the material with clarity. The candidate must have demonstrated competence in the relevant methods of research and presented and defended a thesis by oral examination to the satisfaction of the examiners.

## **Master of Philosophy**

The standard of the MPhil is that expected of a candidate who has investigated critically and evaluated an approved topic, and contributed to knowledge of this topic. The candidate must have demonstrated an understanding of research methods appropriate to the chosen field, and presented and defended a thesis, by oral examination, to the satisfaction of the examiners. The normal periods of study for an MPhil are given in Section A4.1.

## **Doctor of Philosophy**

The standard of the PhD is that expected of a candidate who has investigated critically and evaluated an approved topic resulting in an independent and original contribution to scholarship, worthy of publication in complete and abridged form. The candidate must have shown evidence of ability to undertake further research without supervision and have presented and defended a thesis, by oral examination, to the satisfaction of the examiners. The normal periods of study for a PhD are given in Section A4.1.

## **Master of Philosophy by Public Works**

The standard of the MPhil by Public Works is equivalent to that of an MPhil by thesis. The candidate must have made a personal, systematic, study normally on a single or predominant theme or topic with unity, continuity, and convergent treatment among the works. The candidate must have contributed to knowledge of this theme or topic through critical investigation and evaluation. The candidate must have demonstrated an understanding of research methods appropriate to the chosen theme, and have presented and defended the submitted works to the satisfaction of the examiners.

## **Doctor of Philosophy by Public Works**

The standard of the PhD by Public Works is equivalent to that of a PhD by thesis. The candidate must have made a personal, systematic, study normally on a single or predominant theme with unity, continuity, and convergent treatment among the works. The candidate must have shown originality by the exercise of independent critical power and made a distinct and significant contribution to knowledge. The candidate must have presented and defended the submitted works to the satisfaction of the examiners.

## **Doctor of Engineering**

The standard of the EngD is that expected of a candidate who has investigated critically and evaluated an approved topic resulting in an independent and original contribution to scholarship worthy of publication in complete or abridged form, in an engineering discipline, that is a discipline falling under the purview of the constituent institutions of the Engineering Council.

The candidate must have shown evidence of ability to undertake further research without supervision, presented and defended a thesis by oral examination to the satisfaction of the examiners, completed a programme of course work to the satisfaction of the examiners, and presented the research to an invited audience representing interests internal and external to the University.

The EngD is not a higher doctorate than the PhD. It is qualitatively different in that the study programme will be designed to include features which are particularly appropriate to engineering practice and industrial research. A programme of assessed coursework is mandatory, the project must involve close industrial collaboration, and the student will be assessed partly on his/her ability to manage the project and collaborate with other workers in so doing. The normal periods of study for an EngD are given in Section A4.1.

## **Higher Doctorates**

*(Doctor of Laws, Doctor of Letters, Doctor of Science, Doctor of Technology)*. The standard of the award of LLD, DLitt, DSc or DTech is that expected of an applicant who is a holder of at least seven years' standing of a first degree or holder of at least four years' standing of a higher degree, who is a leading authority in the field of study concerned and has made an original and significant contribution to the advancement or application of knowledge in that field. Full details or requirements for the award of higher doctorates are given in section I).

## Interpretation of the Regulations

### *Formal interpretation*

- (a) Formal interpretation of these regulations may only be made by the Secretary to Academic Board. Such formal interpretation shall be submitted to Academic Board for approval. The findings of Academic Board are binding.
- (b) Formal interpretation of these regulations shall be reported by the Secretary to the Research and Research Degrees Committee which shall also be told whether Academic Board has approved the interpretation.
- (c) Such formal interpretation by the Secretary to Academic Board shall not be concerned with academic judgement, and shall be without prejudice to the authority of internally held panels or exam boards.

### *Academic judgement*

Where academic judgement is concerned, interpretation of Academic Board policy or regulations shall only be made by the Research and Research Degrees Committee or, in exceptional cases where the Research and Research Degrees Committee delegates its authority, by the Chair of the Research and Research Degrees Committee.

### *Informal interpretation*

Informal advice on the interpretation of Academic Board policy or these regulations by the Academic Registrar or other member of University staff shall have no formal binding authority.

## **SECTION A**

### **REGULATIONS FOR THE AWARDS OF MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY DOCTOR OF ENGINEERING**

## **A1 PRINCIPLES**

- A1.1 Middlesex University shall award the degrees of Master of Philosophy (MPhil), Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) and Doctor of Engineering (EngD) to registered candidates (including candidates from partner institutions) who successfully complete approved programmes of supervised research.
- A1.2 For the MPhil, and PhD, programmes of research may be proposed in any field of study subject to the requirement that the proposed programme is capable of leading to scholarly research and to its presentation for assessment by appropriate examiners. For the EngD, the programme of research must be in an engineering discipline, that is, a discipline falling under the purview of the constituent institutions of the Engineering Council. For the MPhil and PhD, a shorter thesis may be presented supplemented by work in another form which constitutes the point of reference and principal mode of enquiry for the thesis. Work in other forms may include creative works, scholarly editions, software and research reports and other forms as may be agreed from time to time. The acceptance of any form of work other than a conventional thesis does not imply any relaxation in the academic standards which are expected for the award concerned. All proposed research programmes shall be considered for research degree registration on their academic merits and without reference to the concerns or interests of any associated funding body.
- A1.3 The University shall encourage co-operation with industrial, commercial, professional or research establishments for the purposes of research leading to research degree awards. Such co-operation shall be intended:
- a to encourage outward-looking and relevant research;
  - b to extend the candidate's own experience and perspectives of the work;
  - c to provide a wider range of experience and expertise to assist in the development of the project;
  - d to be mutually beneficial; and,
  - e where appropriate, to enable the candidate to become a member of a research community.

For the MPhil and PhD such collaboration should be established where appropriate. For the EngD collaboration is mandatory.

Co-operation may be formalised with one or more bodies external to the University or the partner institution. For the purpose of the research degree regulations, where the body is external to the University or the partner institution, it shall be referred to as a Collaborating Establishment. Formal collaboration may involve the candidate's use of facilities and other resources, or supervisory support (such supervisors may be members of the student's supervisory team).

In such cases a formal letter from the Collaborating Establishment confirming the agreed arrangements should be submitted with the application, except where collaboration is an integral part of the project (as for instance with NERC/EPSRC CASE awards). The name/s of the Collaborating Establishment/s shall appear on the candidate's thesis and degree certificate.

The University will also enter into partnerships with collaborative partners to jointly offer research degrees (although with ultimate responsibility for standards and quality always lying with the University). For the purpose of the research degree regulations these shall be referred to as Partner Institutions. Such collaborative provision, and the relationship between the partner institution and the University will be subject to the additional requirements

detailed within these regulations and in the associated *Quality Procedures for Research Degrees*.

- A1.4 In the case of a registration for MPhil, MPhil with the possibility of transfer to PhD, or EngD, this may only take place following approval by the School Research Team or the partner institution research team.
- A1.5 In the case of direct registration for PhD, this may only take place following approval by the University's Research and Research Degrees Committee.

## **A2 APPLICATION AND QUALIFICATIONS FOR REGISTRATION FOR A RESEARCH DEGREE**

- A2.1 A person may apply to register for a research degree, by completing the appropriate form for the degree of:

- a Master of Philosophy;
- b Master of Philosophy with possibility of transfer to Doctor of Philosophy; or
- c Doctor of Philosophy;
- d Doctor of Engineering

- A2.2 In approving an application for registration for MPhil or MPhil with transfer possibility to PhD, the School Research Team or the research team at the partner institution shall satisfy itself: insofar as is reasonably possible on the available information that:

- a the candidate appears suitably qualified to commence the research programme;
- b the candidate's research programme appears viable;
- c the supervision arrangements appear adequate and likely to be satisfied;
- d the University or the partner institution and collaborating establishment (where appropriate) appear able to provide appropriate facilities for the conduct of scholarly research in the area of the research programme.

In approving an application for PhD direct, the Research and Research Degrees Committee shall additionally satisfy itself that a direct PhD registration is justified in the circumstances.

In approving an application for registration for EngD the School Research Committee or the partner institution shall additionally satisfy itself that the candidate is embarking on a viable study programme which will be assessed and meets all the requirements set out in these regulations.

The selection and admission of candidates pursuing their research at a partner institution shall be undertaken by the partner institution. Selection and admission will be conducted in accordance with University criteria as set out in A2.3 or A2.4 and the relevant School Handbook. The University shall ensure that staff at the partner institution are fully conversant with these criteria and in their application and implementation.

- A2.3 An applicant for registration for the degree of MPhil or MPhil with possibility of transfer to PhD shall normally hold a first or second class honours degree of the University, a university in the UK or a qualification which is regarded by the University as equivalent to such an Honours degree.
- A2.4 An applicant holding qualifications other than those in paragraph A2.3 and A2.4 shall be considered on his/her merits and in relation to the nature and scope of the programme of

work proposed. In considering an applicant in this category, the School Research Team or the research team at the partner institution shall look for evidence of the candidate's ability and background knowledge in relation to the proposed research. Professional experience, publications, written reports or other appropriate evidence of accomplishment shall be taken into consideration. The School Research Team or the research team at the partner institution may require an applicant to pass an externally assessed qualifying examination at final year honours degree level before registration is approved. An applicant wishing to be considered under this regulation shall include in the application for registration the names of two suitable persons whom the University or partner institution may consult concerning the candidate's academic attainment and fitness for research.

- A2.5 Direct PhD registration is not normally permitted. Exceptionally, and only by the agreement of the Research and Research Degrees Committee, candidates may be registered for PhD direct but only in circumstances where sponsors require it.

Any candidate registered direct for a PhD shall be required to produce a Confirmation Report no later than half way through their period of research (after two years for PhD by full-time study and after three years by part-time study).

This Confirmation Report shall be treated in exactly the same way as a transfer report and a decision shall be made at School level whether registration should continue for a PhD degree. If a decision is made that the Confirmation Report does not indicate that the research is of a standard to qualify for PhD, then the student shall be required to terminate their registration for PhD and re-register for MPhil. The result of this decision shall be conveyed to the Research and Research Degrees Committee.

- A2.6 An applicant for the degree of EngD shall normally hold a postgraduate qualification at Masters level in an appropriate discipline, or a first degree of at least upper second class honours level in an appropriate discipline, together with significant relevant experience, or substantial postgraduate experience relevant to the project to be undertaken.

There is no requirement for EngD registrations to be dependent on an MPhil with transfer procedure. Applicants shall, therefore, normally be considered suitable for direct doctoral registration either by virtue of their holding an appropriate master's qualification and or by the exceptional level of their first degree qualifications and experience. The decision shall be made by the School Research Team.

- A2.7 An applicant whose work forms part of a larger group project may register for a MPhil or PhD. In such cases each individually registered project shall in itself be distinguishable for the purposes of assessment and be appropriate for the award being sought. The application shall indicate clearly each individual contribution and its relationship to the group project. For the EngD, it is strongly preferred that projects should involve a considerable element of group or team activity. In such cases, a candidate and his/her supervisors must identify his/her contribution to the group and satisfy the examiners as to his/her ability to undertake a significant role in the management and control of the project.

- A2.8 Where a research degree project is part of a piece of funded research, the School Research Team shall establish to its satisfaction that the terms on which the research is funded do not detract from the fulfilment of the objectives and requirements of the candidate's research degree.

- A2.9 The School Research Team or the research team at the partner institution may approve an application from a person proposing to work outside the United Kingdom, and registered as a Distance Learning student, provided that:

- a it has satisfactory evidence as to the facilities available for the research both in the University or partner institution and abroad; and
  - b the arrangements proposed for supervision enable frequent and substantial contact between the candidate and the supervisor/s based in the UK, including adequate personal contact with the supervisor/s. The candidate should normally spend not less than 2 weeks per year at the University or partner institution.
- A2.10 Where a candidate has previously undertaken research as a registered candidate for a research degree the School Research Team or the research team at the partner institution may approve a shorter than usual registration period which takes account of all or part of the time already spent by the candidate on such research.
- A2.11 Where a candidate fails to make progress towards registration that is judged satisfactory by the supervisory team, the School Research Team or the research team at the partner institution 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 School Research Team or the research team at the partner institution may require either that the candidate transfer to a different research degree or withdraw.

### **A3 REGISTRATION**

- A3.1 A candidate for the MPhil or PhD shall follow a programme of related studies where this is necessary for the attainment of competence in research methods and of knowledge related to the subject of the thesis. Candidates at partner institutions shall be entitled to enrol for modules taught at the University in research methods and substantive areas in support of their research projects.

This programme shall be intended:

- a to provide the candidate with the skills and knowledge necessary for the pursuit of the proposed research;
- b to provide a body of knowledge normally associated with a degree in the field of study of the proposed research; and
- c to provide breadth of knowledge in the related subjects.

For candidates at partner institutions the partner institution shall submit to the Research and Business Office of the relevant University School all registration documentation for consideration and approval. Students accepted shall be enrolled as candidates for a qualification of the University and shall enrol with both the University and the partner institution.

Where the programme of related studies includes an approved programme of studies leading to another award and a candidate is registered for that programme and fulfils all its requirements, he/she may be recommended for that award in addition to the degree of MPhil, or PhD.

- A3.2 A candidate for the degree of EngD shall have a coursework programme approved at the time of registration. Assessed coursework is an integral part of the EngD award and is intended to extend the candidate's specific technical knowledge and/or engineering project management skills.

- A3.3 A candidate may undertake a programme of research in which the candidate's own creative work forms, as a point of origin or reference, a significant part of the intellectual enquiry. Such creative work may be in any field (for instance, fine art, design, engineering and technology, architecture, creative writing, musical composition, film, dance and performance), but shall have been undertaken as part of the registered research programme. In such cases, the presentation and submission may be partly in other than written form.
- A3.4 The creative work shall be clearly presented in relation to the argument of a written thesis. The latter shall have a substantial introduction and critical commentary which shall set the creative work in its relevant historical, theoretical, critical, or design context. The thesis itself shall conform to the usual scholarly requirements and be of appropriate length (see paragraph A13.7).
- The creative work shall be in some permanent form (for instance, a copy of the edited texts, a collection of artefacts, video, photographic record, musical score, or diagrammatic representation) which, where practicable, shall be bound with the thesis.
- The application for registration shall set out the form of the candidate's intended submission and of the proposed method of assessment.
- A3.5 A candidate for a research degree, may undertake an integrated programme of work which, as well as the research element, shall include a programme of postgraduate study on which his/her performance shall be formally assessed. Such a course of study shall not occupy more than one third of the total period of registration and shall complement the research.
- A3.6 Except where permission has been given by the Research and Research Degrees Committee for the thesis and the oral examination to be in another language, the School Research Team or the research team at the partner institution shall satisfy itself that the candidate has sufficient command of the English language to complete satisfactorily the programme of work and to prepare and defend a thesis in English.
- A3.7 A candidate for the MPhil and PhD may register on a full-time or a part-time basis. A full-time candidate shall normally devote on average at least 35 hours per week to the research; a part-time candidate on average at least 12 hours per week.
- A3.8 A candidate for the degree of EngD shall normally be required to register on a full-time basis, but this is not intended to inhibit or prescribe any specific pattern of study or attendance. A registration application should indicate that the candidate will be able to pursue the programme undistracted by alternative activities and that he/she should be able to meet the timescales and deadlines proposed in the workplan.
- A3.9 Registration may be backdated for up to 6 months where this 6 months does not pre-date the date of enrolment at the University. Longer periods of backdating may be permitted only exceptionally at the discretion of the School Research Team or the research team at the partner institution.
- A3.10 For candidates at partner institutions, the partner institution shall submit all registration documentation to the University's Research & Business Office for forwarding to the appropriate Link Tutor.
- A3.11 Where a candidate or the University or partner institution wishes the thesis to remain confidential for a period of time after completion of the work, application for approval shall normally be made to the Research and Research Degrees Committee at the time of registration. In cases where the need for confidentiality emerges at a subsequent stage, a

special application for the thesis to remain confidential after submission shall be made immediately to the Research and Research Degrees Committee. The period approved shall normally not exceed two years from the date of the oral examination.

#### **A4 THE REGISTRATION PERIOD**

A4.1 The minimum and maximum periods of registration shall be as follows:

	Minimum	Maximum
<b>MPhil (direct)</b>		
Full-time	18 months	36 months
Part-time	30 months	48 months
<b>PhD (via transfer from MPhil registration)</b>		
Full-time	33 months	60 months
Part-time	45 months	84 months
<b><u>PhD</u> (direct)</b>		
Full-time	33 months	60 months
Part-time	36 months	84 months
<b><u>EngD</u> (direct)</b>		
Full-time	33 months	60 months

A candidate for the EngD shall spend at least 30% of his/her registered period of study (or a minimum of one year) working in the Collaborating Establishment.

A4.2 Candidates will normally be expected to reach the standard for the award for which they are registered at a point half way between the minimum and maximum periods of registration.

A4.3 Where there appears to be evidence that the research is proceeding exceptionally well, the School Research Team or the research team at the partner institution may approve a shorter minimum period of registration. An application for such shortening should be submitted at the same time as the application for approval of examination arrangements.

A4.4 Where a candidate changes from full-time to part-time study or vice versa, the minimum and maximum registration periods shall be calculated as if he/she were a part-time candidate. Notification of such a change shall be made on the appropriate form.

A4.5 A candidate seeking a change to a registered research degree programme shall apply in writing to the School Research Team or the research team at the partner institution for approval.

A4.6 School Research Teams or the research team at the partner institution shall monitor annually the progress of every registered research degree candidate to establish insofar as is reasonably possible on the information available that good progress is being made and that supervision and facilities are adequate.

Upon receipt of monitoring reports from supervisors, School Research Teams or the research team at the partner institution shall take appropriate action. This may include changes in the supervisory team, recommendations to the supervisory team that the student transfer to a different research degree or, in exceptional cases, that the student be required to withdraw.

Supervisors of students at partner institutions shall also submit this report of their students' progress to the relevant University's Research & Business Office. Students at partner institutions are encouraged to complete a progress report which should also be sent to the University's Research & Business Office. Both sets of reports shall be considered at the Annual Progression Meeting of the relevant School.

- A4.7 In all cases where the School Research Team or the research team at the partner institution and supervisory team are agreed that a student's progress is unsatisfactory and that either transfer to a different research degree or withdrawal is required, the candidate shall be informed of this fact, in writing, by the School Research Team or the research team at the partner institution. The candidate shall be given a reasonable time scale (not normally less than 4 months) for improvements to be made. Where these improvements are not made by the stated date, the candidate shall be informed in writing by the School Research Team or the research team at the partner institution that a decision has been made to end the registration or to effect a transfer to a different research degree.
- A4.8 A candidate may appeal to the Research and Research Degrees Committee via the University Research and Business Office against a decision of the School Research Team or the research team at the partner institution. The only grounds for appeal are administrative or other irregularities. Appeals against academic judgement are not permitted.
- A4.9 Where the candidate is prevented by ill-health or other good cause, from making progress with the research, the registration may be suspended by the School Research Team or the research team at the partner institution in its discretion, normally for not more than one year at a time. It is the candidate's responsibility to inform the School Research Administrator or the research administrator at the partner institution of any circumstances, medical or otherwise, which may affect his/her programme of study.
- A4.10 A candidate shall submit the thesis to the University Research Office in order that it is received before the expiry of the maximum period of registration. The School Research Team or the research team at the partner institution may exceptionally extend a candidate's period of registration, normally for not more than one year at a time. A candidate seeking such an extension shall apply on the appropriate form. Any extension granted shall be notified to the candidate in writing.
- A4.11 Where a candidate has discontinued the research, the withdrawal of registration shall be notified to the School Research Team or the research team at the partner institution on the appropriate form.
- A4.12 A candidate shall pay such fees as may be determined from time to time by the University and which are notified to the candidate at the beginning of each academic year.

## **A5 SUPERVISION**

- A5.1 A research degree candidate shall have at least two and normally not more than three supervisors. Where there are two supervisors, at least one and normally both shall be research active. A third supervisor may work in an industrial or commercial company which may be the collaborating establishment.

Supervision for candidates at partner institutions shall be provided by the partner institution depending on the requirements of each individual research project.

- A5.2 In the case of candidates registered for the degree of EngD, at least one supervisor shall be from the Collaborating Establishment. At least one of the supervisors shall have successfully supervised at doctoral level. A supervision team shall normally have had a combined

experience of supervising no fewer than two research degree candidates to successful completion.

A5.3 In the case of candidates registered for the degree of MPhil, the Director of Studies shall have supervised at least one candidate to successful completion at that level. In the case of a PhD, or MPhil with transfer possibility to PhD, the Director of Studies shall have successfully supervised at least one candidate to successful completion of a PhD. Other supervisors on the team shall be research active and have expertise in the relevant field but need not have previous supervisory experience.

A5.4 One supervisor shall be the Director of Studies (first supervisor) with responsibility to supervise the candidate on a regular and frequent basis.

For candidates at partner institutions Directors of Studies shall in all circumstances be academic staff of the partner institution but other supervisors may be drawn from other institutions as appropriate. All supervisors shall be nominated by the partner institution in accordance with the requirements set out in A5.1 to A5.3 above and approved by the University.

The University requires the partner institution to ensure that all its research degree supervisors undertake appropriate supervisory training. Research degree supervisors at the partner institution shall be eligible to attend the University's training programme for research degree supervisors run by the University's Research and Business Office.

A5.5 In addition to the supervisors, an adviser or advisers may be proposed to contribute some specialised knowledge or a link with an external organisation.

A5.6 A candidate for a research degree shall be ineligible to act as Director of Studies for another research degree candidate but may act as a second supervisor or adviser.

A5.7 Any proposal for a change in supervision arrangements shall be made to the School Research Team or the research team at the partner institution on the appropriate form.

## **A6 TRANSFER OF REGISTRATION FROM MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY TO DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

A6.1 A candidate initially registered for MPhil with possibility of transfer to PhD who wishes to transfer to PhD shall apply on the appropriate form to the School Research Team or the research team at the partner institution when he/she has made sufficient progress on the work to provide evidence of the development to PhD. This shall normally be after 18-22 months of full-time study or the part-time equivalent.

A6.2 In support of a transfer application, the candidate shall prepare for the School Research Team (or a sub-group which includes at least one member of the Committee) or the research team at the partner institution a transfer portfolio consisting of the submission of:

(a) a significant body of work explaining the status of the research material to date, in a coherent format and to an appropriate standard, which demonstrates clearly an adequate understanding, knowledge, and justification of appropriate research design and methods. (6,000 to 10,000 words, or equivalent)

and

(b) a critical evaluation of research progress to date and a clear explanation of future research to be done, its expected contribution to knowledge and/or new insights, and a

programme of work for completing the project to the required standard. (3,000 to 6,000 words).

These requirements are the minima set by the University. Schools or the research team at the partner institution may require further evidence of good progress.

For candidates at partner institutions, the partner institution shall submit all transfer documentation to the University's Research & Business Office for forwarding to the appropriate Link Tutor.

- A6.3 Before approving transfer from MPhil to PhD the School Research Team or the research team at the partner institution shall be satisfied that the candidate appears to have made sufficient progress and that the proposed programme provides a suitable basis for work at PhD standard which the candidate appears at that time to be capable of pursuing to completion. An oral assessment may be used by the School Research Team or the research team at the partner institution in appropriate circumstances as part of its assessment of the case for transfer.
- A6.4 A candidate registered for the degree of MPhil only may apply for transfer to PhD. In such cases, the candidate's full progress report shall be submitted to the School Research Team or the research team at the partner institution along with the application for transfer.
- A6.5 A candidate registered for the degree of EngD may transfer at any stage in the programme to an MPhil or PhD registration, with the approval of the School Research Team or the research team at the partner institution. In such a case, the project proposal and the progress made must be deemed suitable for progression towards the alternative award.
- A6.6 A candidate who is registered for the degree of PhD and who is unable to complete the approved programme of work may, at any time prior to the submission of the thesis for examination, apply to the School Research Team or the research team at the partner institution for the registration to convert to that of MPhil.

## **A7 EXAMINATIONS - GENERAL**

- A7.1 The examination for the MPhil and PhD shall have two stages: Firstly the submission and preliminary assessment of the thesis and secondly its defence by oral or approved alternative (see paragraph 7.3) examination.
- A7.2 A candidate whose programme of work includes formally assessed course work in a programme of work leading to the degree of PhD (see paragraph 3.5) 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.
- A7.3 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 Research and Research Degrees Committee is satisfied that a candidate would be under serious disadvantage if required to undergo an oral examination, an alternative form of examination or modification to the oral examination procedure 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.
- A7.4 An oral examination shall normally be held in the UK. In special cases the Research and Research Degrees Committee may give approval for the examination to take place abroad.

- A7.5 Supervisors and others on the University or partner institution staff may be present as observers only with the agreement of the candidate and the examiners. Observers are not expected to participate in the discussion but may answer questions put to them by the Chair. The Chair shall determine whether the observers shall withdraw prior to the deliberations of the examiners on the outcome of the examination.
- A7.6 The Research and Research Degrees Committee 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.
- A7.7 The examination for the EngD shall have an additional stage. The candidate is required to pass the prescribed coursework assessments before proceeding to the examination of the thesis. The nature of these assessments shall be determined at the time of registration and details of the result shall be communicated to the thesis examiners. The public presentation of the thesis will not form part of the EngD assessment, except that the degree award will be contingent upon its having taken place.
- A7.8 The degree of MPhil or PhD may be awarded posthumously on the basis of a thesis completed by a candidate which is ready for submission for examination, or of research completed by a candidate that is comparable in level and extent with that completed by a candidate who has completed a thesis. In such cases the Research and Research Degrees Committee shall seek evidence that the candidate would have been likely to have been successful had the oral examination taken place.
- A7.9 Where evidence of academic misconduct in the preparation of the thesis or other irregularities in the conduct of the examination come to light subsequent to the recommendation of the examiners, the Research and Research Degrees Committee shall consider the matter, if necessary in consultation with the examiners, and take appropriate action.
- A7.10 The Research and Research Degrees Committee 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 Research and Research Degrees Committee 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.
- A7.11 In accordance with the Data Protection Act and University policy, candidates and supervisors are permitted to see all reports written by examiners. This fact shall be made clear to examiners at the time of their appointment.

## **A8 EXAMINATION PROCEDURES**

- A8.1 The Director of Studies shall via the School Research Team or the partner institution, propose on the appropriate form the arrangements for the candidate's examination to the Research and Research Degrees Committee for approval. This should be done about three months before the expected date of the examination. The examination may not take place until the examination arrangements have been approved. In special circumstances the Research and Research Degrees Committee may act directly to appoint examiners and arrange the examination of a candidate.
- A8.2 For the EngD, the examiners of the thesis shall be appointed before the end of the second year of study in order that they may become familiar with the project and the nature of the external collaboration.

- A8.3 The Research & Business Office 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.
- A8.4 The Research & Business Office or the equivalent at the partner institution shall notify the candidate, all supervisors and the examiners of the date, time, and venue of the oral examination.
- A8.5 Examiners should not normally have less than 4 weeks to read and evaluate the thesis. Where the examiners have agreed to examine a longer than usual thesis (see A13.7), extra time should be permitted as determined by the examiners.
- The Research & Business Office or the equivalent at the partner institution shall send a copy of the thesis to each examiner, and the Research Manager (Policy and Students) shall send each examiner a preliminary report form and the University's regulations, and shall ensure that the examiners are properly briefed as to their duties.
- A8.6 The Research & Business Office or the equivalent at the partner institution shall ensure that all the examiners have completed and returned the preliminary reports to the University or partner institution before the oral examination takes place.

## **A9 THE CANDIDATE'S RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE EXAMINATION PROCESS**

- A9.1 The candidate shall ensure that the thesis is submitted and received by the appropriate officer of the University before the expiry of the registration period.
- A9.2 The submission of the thesis for examination 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.
- A9.3 Where a candidate submits his/her thesis against the advice of the supervisors, the supervisors shall make known this fact, in writing, to the Middlesex University Research Office, immediately the submission is made. The Middlesex University Research Office shall not inform any of the examiners of this fact but shall inform the Chair of the Examination Board.
- A9.4 The candidate shall satisfy any conditions of eligibility for examination required by the Research and Research Degrees Committee.
- A9.5 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.
- A9.6 The candidate shall confirm, through the submission of a declaration form, 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, personal 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.
- A9.7 The candidate shall ensure that the thesis format is in accordance with the requirements of the University's regulations (see section A13). Theses may be submitted for examination either in perfect binding or in permanently bound form. Perfect-binding is a method of

binding single sheets by gluing them together on the spine of the document. Permanently bound form involves stitching the pages together.

The thesis shall be presented in a permanent binding of the approved type (see paragraph A13.12 for details) before the degree may be awarded. A thesis submitted in a perfect binding 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.

## **A10 EXAMINERS AND CHAIR**

A10.1 All research degree oral examinations shall be chaired. A Chair shall be independent of the candidate's supervisory team and shall normally be a senior academic with experience of research degree examining. A Chair is not an examiner. His/her role is to ensure that the examiners are fully apprised of, and follow, the regulations and procedures of the University relating to research degree examinations.

Chairs for examinations of candidates at partner institutions are, initially, University staff. This responsibility may later be delegated to staff at the partner institution. Chairs will be appropriately trained by the University.

Chairs from partner institutions will be approved by the Research and Research Degrees Committee.

A10.2 A candidate shall be examined by at least two and normally not more than three examiners (except where paragraphs A11.5, A12.2, or A12.8 apply).

A10.3 An internal examiner shall be defined as an examiner who is:

- a a member of staff of the University or the partner institution; or
- b a member of staff of the candidate's Collaborating Establishment.
- c Visiting Professors, Emeritus Professors, Honorary Professors of the University or of the partner institution.

A10.4 A candidate's supervisor or adviser shall not be an internal examiner. A member of staff of the University or the partner institution or a member of staff of the candidate's Collaborating Establishment may be an internal examiner provided he/she has at no time been connected with the candidate's research.

A10.5 There shall not be more than one internal examiner.

An exam board may consist of:

- (a) Two external examiners or
- (b) One external examiner and one internal examiner or
- (c) Two external examiners and one internal examiner

A10.6 An external examiner shall be independent both of the University or the partner institution and of the Collaborating Establishment and shall not have acted previously as the candidate's supervisor or adviser. 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 or the partner institution. Former members of staff of the University or the partner institution shall normally not be approved as external examiners

until three years after the termination of their employment with the University or the partner institution.

For candidates at partner institutions external examiners shall be nominated by the partner institution and approved by the Research and research Degrees Committee.

The Research and Research Degrees Committee shall ensure that the same external examiner is not approved so frequently in its opinion that his/her familiarity with the department might prejudice objective judgement.

- A10.7 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.
- A10.8 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.
- A10.9 In an examination for MPhil at least one external examiner shall have experience (that is normally not less than two previous examinations) of examining research degree candidates. In an examination for PhD or EngD, at least one external examiner shall have experience (that is, normally not less than two previous examinations) of PhD examining.
- A10.10 No candidate for a research degree shall act as an examiner.
- A10.11 The University shall determine and pay the fees and expenses of the examiners.

## **A11 FIRST EXAMINATION**

- A11.1 Each examiner shall read and examine the thesis and submit, on the appropriate form, an independent preliminary report on it to the University Research Officer 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 (as set out on pages 1 and 2 of these regulations) and where possible make an appropriate provisional recommendation subject to the outcome of any oral examination.
- A11.2 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. This shall be given to the Chair of the oral examination for forwarding to the University Research Office. 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 Research and Research Degrees Committee to satisfy itself that the recommendation chosen in paragraph A11.3 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.

- A11.3 Following the completion of the examination the examiners may recommend to Research and Research Degrees Committee that:
- a the candidate be awarded the degree;
  - b the candidate be awarded the degree subject to minor amendments being made to the thesis (see paragraph A11.4);
  - c the candidate be permitted to re-submit for the degree and be re-examined, with or without an oral examination (see section A12);

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- d the candidate be not awarded the degree and be not permitted to be re-examined (see paragraphs A11.8 and A11.9); or
- e in the case of a PhD examination, the candidate be awarded the degree of MPhil subject to the presentation of the thesis amended to the satisfaction of the examiners.
- f in the case of the EngD examination, the candidate be awarded the degree of PhD or MPhil with or without an oral examination and subject to the presentation of the thesis amended to the satisfaction of the examiners.

Examiners may indicate informally their recommendation on the result of the examination to the candidate but they shall make it clear that the decision rests with the Research and Research Degrees Committee.

Chairs of oral examinations (both examinations held at the University and those held at the partner institutions) shall ensure that all exam paperwork is forwarded to the Research & Business Office.

- A11.4 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 minor amendments and corrections not so substantial as to call for the submission of a revised thesis, and recommend to Research and Research Degrees Committee that the degree be awarded subject to the candidate amending the thesis to the satisfaction of the internal and/or the external examiner(s) (see sub-paragraph A11.3b), they shall state in writing what amendments and corrections are required. These shall be sent by the examiners to the University Research Office for forwarding to the candidate.
- A11.5 Where the examiners' recommendations are not unanimous, the Research and Research Degrees Committee 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.
- A11.6 Where an additional external examiner is appointed under sub-paragraph A11.5c, he/she 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 Research and Research Degrees Committee shall complete the examination as set out in paragraph A7.6.
- A11.7 A further examination in addition to the oral examination may be requested by the examiners. In such cases the approval of the Research and Research Degrees Committee 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 Research and Research Degrees Committee permits otherwise. Any such examination shall be deemed to be part of the candidate's first examination.
- A11.8 Where the preliminary report forms show that the examiners are of the opinion that no useful purpose would be served by conducting an oral examination at that stage, the Chair of the oral examination may recommend that the Research and Research Degrees Committee dispense with the oral examination and refer the thesis for further work. In such cases, the examiners shall provide the University Research Office with written guidance for the candidate concerning the deficiencies of the thesis. The examiners should not recommend that a candidate fail outright (see sub paragraph A11.3d) without holding an oral

examination or other alternative examination (see paragraph A7.3) at a later date and following further work on the thesis.

- A11.9 Where the Research and Research Degrees Committee 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. This statement shall be forwarded to the University Research Office by the Chair of the oral examination.
- A11.10 In all cases where a submission is failed, or where the degree awarded is other than that for which the thesis was submitted, a panel of enquiry shall be set up to investigate the reasons. This shall report its conclusions to Research and Research Degrees Committee, and appropriate action shall be agreed and implemented.

## **A12 RE-EXAMINATION**

- A12.1 One re-examination will normally be permitted by the Research and Research Degrees Committee, 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 (see paragraph A7.3) or any further examination required under paragraph A11.7 may, on the recommendation of the examiners and with the approval of the Research and Research Degrees Committee, be permitted to revise the thesis and be re-examined;
  - b the Chair of the Exam Board shall provide the Research & Business Office with written guidance on the deficiencies of the thesis which the Research & Business Office shall forward to the candidate.
  - c the candidate shall submit for re-examination in not normally less than three months and not normally more than one calendar year from the date of the oral examination. Where the Research and Research Degrees Committee has dispensed with the oral examination the re-examination shall take place within one calendar year of the date of this dispensation (see paragraph A11.8). The Research and Research Degrees Committee may, where there are good reasons, approve an extension of this period.
- A12.2 The Research and Research Degrees Committee may require that an additional external examiner be appointed for a re-examination.
- A12.3 There are five forms of re-examination:
- a where the candidate's performance in the first oral or approved alternative examination (see paragraph A7.3) or further examination (see paragraph A11.7) was satisfactory but the thesis was unsatisfactory and the examiners on re-examination certify that the thesis as revised is satisfactory, the Research and Research Degrees Committee may exempt the candidate from further examination, oral or otherwise;
  - b where the candidate's performance in the first oral or approved alternative examination (see paragraph A7.3) or further examination (see paragraph A11.7) 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 (see paragraph A7.3);
  - c where on the first examination the candidate's thesis was so unsatisfactory that the Research and Research Degrees Committee dispensed with the oral examination (see paragraph A11.8), any re-examination shall include a re-examination of the thesis and an oral or approved alternative examination (see paragraph A7.3);

- 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 prescribed in sub-paragraph A12.1c, 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 Research and Research Degrees Committee.

A12.4 In the case of a re-examination under sub-paragraphs A12.3a, b or c, each examiner shall read and examine the thesis and submit, on the appropriate form, an independent preliminary report on it to the University Research Officer 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 (as set out on pages 1 and 2) and where possible make an appropriate provisional recommendation subject to the outcome of any oral examination. The examiners shall make their assessment only on those issues which were raised in the first examination and which were made known to the student in the written report on the deficiencies of the thesis (A11.9).

A12.5 Following the re-examination of the thesis under sub-paragraph A12.3a or following an oral or other examination under A12.3b, c, d or e, 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 Research & Business Office. 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 Research and Research Degrees Committee to satisfy itself that the recommendation chosen in paragraph A12.6 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.

A12.6 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 minor amendments being made to the thesis (see paragraph A12.7);
- c the candidate be not awarded the degree and be not permitted to be re-examined (see paragraphs A12.11 and A12.12); or
- d in the case of a PhD examination, the candidate be awarded the degree of MPhil subject to the presentation of the thesis amended to the satisfaction of the examiners.
- e in the case of the EngD examination, the candidate be awarded the degree of PhD or MPhil subject to the presentation of the thesis amended to the satisfaction of the examiners.

Examiners may indicate informally their recommendation on the result of the examination to the candidate but they shall make it clear that the decision rests with the Research and Research Degrees Committee.

A12.7 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 minor 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) (see sub-paragraph

A12.6b). They shall state in writing what amendments and corrections are required. These shall be sent by the examiners to the [Research & Business Office](#) for forwarding to the candidate.

- A12.8 Where the examiners' recommendations are not unanimous, the Research and Research Degrees Committee may:
- a accept a majority recommendation (provided that the majority includes at least one external examiner);
  - b accept the recommendation of the external examiner; or
  - c require the appointment of an additional external examiner.
- A12.9 Where an additional external examiner is appointed under sub-paragraph A12.8c, he/she 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 Research and Research Degrees Committee shall complete the examination as set out in paragraph A7.6.
- A12.10 A further examination in addition to the oral examination may be requested by the examiners. In such cases the approval of the Research and Research Degrees Committee 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 Research and Research Degrees Committee permits otherwise.
- A12.11 In the case of a re-examination under sub-paragraph A12.3b, 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, they may recommend that the Research and Research Degrees Committee dispense with the oral examination and not award the degree under sub-paragraph A12.6c (see also paragraph A12.12).
- A12.12 Where the Research and Research Degrees Committee 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 Research & Business Office.
- A12.13 In all cases where a resubmission is failed, or where the degree awarded is other than that for which the thesis was submitted, a panel of enquiry shall be set up to investigate the reasons. This shall report its conclusions to Research and Research Degrees Committee, and appropriate action shall be agreed and implemented.

### **A13 THESIS**

- A13.1 Copies of the thesis shall be submitted for examination to the University Research Office, bound in accordance with regulation A9.7. Examiners and observers shall each have one copy of the thesis. Further copies for distribution are at the discretion of the candidate.
- A13.2 Except with the specific permission of the Research and Research Degree Committee the thesis shall be presented in English.
- A13.3 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.

- A13.4 The thesis shall include a statement of the candidate's objectives and shall acknowledge published or other sources of material consulted (including an appropriate bibliography) and any assistance received.
- A13.5 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.
- A13.6 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 with the thesis or placed in an adequately secured pocket at the end of the thesis.
- A13.7 Normally the text of a PhD thesis in all disciplines and that of an EngD (excluding supplementary material such as tables, diagrams, appendices, references, and the bibliography) shall not exceed 80,000 words.

Normally the text of an MPhil thesis in all disciplines (excluding supplementary material such as tables, diagrams, appendices, references, and the bibliography, shall not exceed 40,000 words.

Note that these word lengths should be regarded as guidelines only. Variation is permitted according to the particular thesis and/or the discipline of the research. Concise writing and brevity is always recommended.

Where the candidate's own *creative work* forms the point of reference and principal mode of enquiry for the thesis - or where the thesis involves the preparation of a scholarly edition - the written thesis should normally be within the range:

PhD	30,000 - 40,000 words
MPhil	15,000 - 20,000 words

- A13.8 Following the award of the degree of MPhil or PhD or EngD, the candidate shall submit to the Research and Business Office one copy of the thesis in a suitable electronic storage medium (as decided by the University).
- A13.9 The electronic copy submitted to the University shall become the property of the University. Copyright in the thesis 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 research undertaken.
- A13.10 In cases, where there is a collaborating establishment, the candidate shall submit one further copy of the thesis to the Research and Business Office. This shall be either a hard bound copy or an electronic copy according to the requirements of the collaborating establishment.
- A13.11 Following receipt of the electronic copy of the thesis (and subject to regulation A13.12 below), the Research and Business Office shall lodge this in the University Library for inclusion in the Middlesex University Research Repository. Partner institution theses shall also be lodged in the Repository.

In cases where there is a collaborating establishment (and subject to regulation A13.12 below), the Research and Business Office shall arrange for a copy of the candidate's thesis to be placed in the library of the collaborating establishment.

- A13.12 Where the Research and Research Degrees Committee has agreed that the confidential nature of the candidate's work is such as to preclude the thesis being made freely available in the library of the University (and Collaborating Establishment, if any) and, in the case of a PhD or EngD, the British Library, 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 be made available only to those who were directly involved in the project.

The Research and Research Degrees Committee 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 Research and Research Degrees Committee may approve a longer period. Where a shorter period would be adequate the Research and Research Degrees Committee shall not automatically grant confidentiality for two years.

A candidate who wishes to delay inclusion of his/her thesis in the Middlesex University Research Repository should write to the Research and Business Office giving reasons. The case for delayed inclusion will be considered and a decision given.

- A13.13 The following requirements shall be adhered to in the format of the submitted thesis:

- a the title page shall give the following information:
  - the full title of the thesis;
  - the full name of the author;
  - that the degree is awarded by the University; **or**
  - that the degree is awarded jointly by the University and the partner institution;
  - the award for which the thesis is submitted in partial fulfilment of its requirements;
  - the Collaborating Establishment/s, if any; and
  - the month and year of submission of the final and approved version of the thesis.
- b the abstract, contents page(s), and full bibliography shall be included;
- c all appendices submitted for examination shall be included.
- d pages shall be numbered consecutively throughout the main text including photographs and/or diagrams included as whole pages;
- e double, one-and-a-half, or single spacing may be used throughout the text; single spacing should be used for indented quotations or footnotes.

## **A14 LODGING THESIS IN THE MIDDLESEX UNIVERSITY RESEARCH REPOSITORY**

- A14.1 All candidates of the University and of the partner institutions who have been awarded the degree of PhD, EngD or MPhil shall submit to the Research and Business Office one copy of the thesis in a suitable electronic storage medium (as decided by the University) together with a completed and signed Middlesex University Research Repository Agreement Form. Candidates shall not normally be awarded a degree certificate until the electronic dissertation and completed form have been received by the University.
- A14.2 The electronic copy submitted to the University shall become the property of the University. Copyright in the thesis 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 research undertaken.
- A14.3 Following receipt of the electronic copy of the thesis (and subject to regulation A14.4 below), the Research and Business Office shall lodge this in the University Library for inclusion in the Middlesex University Research Repository. Partner institution theses shall also be lodged in the Repository.
- A14.4 Where Research and Research Degrees Committee has agreed that the confidential nature of the candidate's work is such as to preclude the thesis being made freely available in the Research Repository, the thesis shall, immediately on completion of the programme of work, be retained by the Research & Business Office on restricted access and, for a time not exceeding the approved period, shall be made available only to those who were directly involved in the project. Candidates shall sign the Middlesex University Research Repository Agreement Form but the thesis shall not be included in the Repository until after the approved time period has elapsed.

## **A15 REVIEW OF AN EXAMINATION DECISION**

Candidates who wish to appeal against the decision of the Research and Research Degrees Committee should consult Section J of these Regulations.



## **SECTION B**

### **REGULATIONS FOR THE AWARD OF A RESEARCH DEGREE BY PUBLIC WORKS**

## **B1 PRINCIPLES**

- B1.1 The University's Research Degrees by Public Works (MPhil and PhD) 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 published works undertaken prior to enrolment for the degree, and a context statement undertaken at the University or the partner institution under supervision.
- B1.2 A candidate must satisfy the examiners both in respect of the submission and orally in order to be awarded the degree.
- B1.3 The University shall consider applications for these degrees in any field for which it can offer supervision, 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.
- B1.4 Works accepted for publication but not yet published are considered eligible with a letter of verification from the publisher. Other forms of works accepted for public display or for the public domain require similar verification from an appropriate authority.
- B1.5 The context statement shall normally be not less than 10,000 words and not more than 30,000 words.

## **B2 ELIGIBILITY**

- B2.1 The University shall consider applications from staff of the University and from persons who have no connection with the University.
- B2.2 The partner institution shall consider applications from staff of the University and from persons who have no connection with the partner institution.
- B2.3 The University or partner institution shall consider an application from a person based outside the UK provided it is satisfied that the arrangements proposed for supervision enable frequent and substantial contact between the candidate and supervisor(s) based in the UK and/or its regional offices.

## **B3 APPLICATION**

- B3.1 A candidate shall apply for the research degree by public works by completing the appropriate form and sending this together with the current non-returnable application fee to the University.
- B3.2 A candidate whose list of publications or other public domain works includes works of joint authorship shall submit a signed statement to clarify his/her own contribution to these works. In the case of works of art, the collaborators shall sign such a statement.

## **B4 ACCEPTANCE**

- B4.1 A candidate's application shall be forwarded to the appropriate School or the partner institution where the quality and quantity of the public works shall be assessed and verified. (The standards required for the PhD by public works and the MPhil by public works are given on page 1, and in the Notes of Guidance).
- B4.2 In cases where the outcome of the assessment is positive, the candidate shall be interviewed.

- B4.3 The outcomes of the assessment of all applications received, whether positive or otherwise, shall be communicated to the applicants in writing.

## **B5 PREPARATION FOR REGISTRATION**

- B5.1 The appropriate School or the partner institution shall appoint a supervisor to prepare the candidate for registration. This shall consist in assisting the candidate in selecting the publications or other public domain works for the degree, in formulating the scheme and rationale of the context statement, and in advising on any further reading.
- B5.2 The supervisor shall also advise the candidate on whether he/she should be examined for the degree of MPhil by Public Works or PhD by Public Works.
- B5.3 The supervisor appointed by the School or the partner institution shall be experienced in supervising candidates for research degrees by thesis, or shall have supervised previously candidates for research degrees by public works. Adequate supervision shall normally be taken as a minimum of three research degrees by either route. Supervision shall be at the appropriate level – experience at MPhil or PhD level for the MPhil by Public Works, and at PhD level for the PhD by Public Works.
- B5.4 Where a candidate fails to make progress towards registration that is judged satisfactory by the supervisor(s), the School Research Team or the partner institution shall advise the candidate of this fact in writing, and identify a reasonable timescale (not normally less than 4 months) for improvements to be made. Should the progress be judged insufficient at the end of the stated period, the School Research Team or the partner institution may require either that the candidate transfer to a different degree (MPhil by Public Works) or withdraw.

## **B6 REGISTRATION**

- B6.1 No later than 6 months after enrolment, the School Research Team or the partner institution, either through a registration panel or alternative informal process, 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.
- B6.2 The School Research Team or the partner institution shall also consider whether the candidate should be assessed for the degree of PhD by public works or MPhil by Public Works.

## **B7 PUBLICATIONS IN NON-WRITTEN FORM**

- B7.1 The University shall also consider work for the degrees of MPhil and PhD by Public Works in non-written form. These may include creative works that have been made public 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 supervisors and examiners.
- B7.2 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. This published written work shall constitute a reasoned commentary on the other forms.
- B7.3 The combined works shall constitute the equivalent of a complete MPhil or PhD, as relevant, with the written content constituting at least half the intellectual contribution.

B7.4 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. The normal registration process set out in B5 and B6 above also applies to non-written submissions.

B7.5 The works shall be supplemented by a context statement.

## **B8 EXAMINERS**

B8.1 When the supervisor 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 & Business Office (RBO).

B8.2 There shall be two external examiners. These shall not currently hold any appointment of the University, the partner institution or of an associated institution, nor have been a co-author of any of the works on which the candidate's application is based, and shall not be selected from an institution where the candidate is currently employed or has been recently employed.

B8.3 Additionally, there may be an independent internal examiner. The independent internal examiner shall have had no supervisory or advisory contact with the candidate during the period of registration.

B8.4 The oral examination shall have a Chair.

## **B9 SUBMISSION OF PUBLIC WORKS**

B9.1 The candidate shall submit to the University Research & Business Office (RBO) two or three copies, appropriately bound, of all the public works on which the application is based (dependent on the number of examiners).

B9.2 Normally, where journal articles 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.

B9.3 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. Two or three copies of this record shall be submitted (dependent on the number of examiners).

## **B10 PREVIOUS SUBMISSION OF WORKS**

B10.1 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 Doctor of Philosophy by Public Works or Master of Philosophy by Public Works.

## **B11 EXAMINATION**

B11.1 The candidate shall be examined *viva voce*. The examination board shall be composed of a Chair and examiners duly appointed by Research and Research Degrees Committee. There shall be two external examiners. 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.

- B11.2 In respect of the criteria for the role of external examiner and Chair, regulation A10 shall be applied.
- B11.3 In examining the candidate for the degree of PhD by public works, the examiners shall determine whether the submission fulfils the standard for this degree:
- B11.4 In examining a candidate for the degree of MPhil by Public Works, the examiners shall determine whether the submission fulfils the standard for this degree.
- B11.5 Prior to the oral examination, each examiner shall be required to complete, independently and without prior consultation a preliminary report form on the public works and context statement and to submit this to the University Research & Business Office (RBO). This shall also apply in the case of partner institution report forms.

## **B12 EXAMINERS' REPORT**

- B12.1 After the examination the examiners shall report collectively on the works submitted and on the *viva voce* 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 Research and Research Degrees Committee:
- i that the degree be awarded;
  - ii that the degree be awarded subject to revisions to the context statement or other revisions required by the examiners;
  - iii that the degree be not awarded.
  - iv that, in the case of a PhD by Public Works examination, the candidate be awarded the degree of MPhil by Public Works.
- B12.2 Following the oral examination, all exam documentation shall be forwarded to the University Research & Business Office. This also applies to exam documentation from the partner institution.
- B12.3 The recommendation of the examiners shall be considered by the Research and Research Degrees Committee, and a decision made.
- B12.4 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 public works, the context statement, and the reports of all the examiners.
- B12.5 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 prior to consideration by Research and Research Degrees Committee.
- B12.6 A candidate to whom the degree is not awarded may reapply at any time, provided that such an application includes substantial additional public works based upon further study and research, and a revised context statement.
- B12.7 A candidate to whom the degree of MPhil by Public Works is awarded may reapply for the degree of PhD by Public Works provided that such an application includes substantial additional public works based upon further study and research, and a revised context statement, or may apply to study for a PhD by thesis (see *Research Degree Regulations, Section A*).

B12.8 In accordance with the Data Protection Act and University policy, candidates and supervisors are permitted to see all reports written by examiners. This fact shall be made clear to examiners at the time of their appointment.

### **B13 LODGING SUBMITTED WORKS IN THE MIDDLESEX UNIVERSITY RESEARCH REPOSITORY**

B13.1 Following the award of the degree of PhD by Public Works or the degree of MPhil by Public Works, the candidate shall submit to the Research and Business Office one copy of the context statement in a suitable electronic medium (as decided by the University) for inclusion in the Middlesex University Research Repository. Where copyright arrangements permit, the candidate shall also submit to the Research and Business Office one copy of each of the other items of the submission in electronic format. Where copyright arrangements do not permit this, these items shall be submitted as paper copy and retained in the University Library. Candidates are required to sign the Middlesex University Research Repository Agreement Form. *Partner institution context statements shall also be lodged in the Repository.*

B13.2 Disposal of the paper copies of the submission shall be at the discretion of the University but normally one full set of the submission (context statement plus publications) shall be returned to the candidate.

B13.3 A candidate shall not normally be awarded a degree certificate until the electronic copy of the context statement and the accompanying public works (either in electronic or paper form) have been received by the Research and Business Office.

### **B14 AWARD**

B14.1 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.

### **B15 CANDIDATES IN DEBT**

B15.1 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.

### **B16 APPEAL**

B16.1 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 Appeal Regulations, section E of these Regulations.

## **SECTION C**

**REGULATIONS FOR THE DEGREE OF MA (BY RESEARCH)**

**MSc (BY RESEARCH) AND LLM (BY RESEARCH)**

## **C1 PRINCIPLES**

- C1.1 Middlesex University shall award the degrees of MA (by Research), MSc (by Research) and LLM (by Research) to candidates (including candidates from partner institutions) who successfully complete approved programmes of supervised research. The degree shall be awarded as a pass, or with merit or with distinction.
- C 1.2 Programmes of research may be proposed in any field of study subject to the requirement that the proposed programme is capable of leading to a dissertation containing research work of merit and to its presentation for assessment by appropriate assessors.
- C 1.3 Enrolment for the degree of MA (by Research), MSc (by Research) or LLM (by Research) shall take place only with the approval of the School Research Team or the partner institution research team or by those whom it nominates to act on its behalf.
- C 1.4 The School Research Team or the partner institution research team or those whom it nominates to act on its behalf shall decide in each case whether the degree to be awarded to a candidate be titled an MA (by Research) or an MSc (by Research) or an LLM (by Research).
- C 1.5 The dissertation shall be written in English except where permission has been given by Research and Research Degrees Committee for another language to be used owing to the nature of the subject. In all cases, the abstract shall be in English.

## **C2 STANDARDS AND REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE**

- C2.1 The dissertation and any other assessment for the degree of MA (by Research), MSc (by Research) or LLM (by Research) should demonstrate that the candidate:
- .1 has an adequate knowledge of the discipline within which the research is grounded, and of the literature relevant to the research;
  - .2 is proficient in the relevant method(s) of research;
  - .3 has successfully undertaken an independent investigation;
  - .4 can present information clearly; and
  - .5 can put forward arguments in a coherent form.
  - .6 can draw appropriate conclusions from the research.
- C2.2 A candidate may undertake a programme of research in which the candidate's own creative work forms, as a point of origin or reference, a significant part of the intellectual enquiry. Such creative work may be in any field (for instance, fine art, design, computing, creative writing, musical composition, film, dance, or performance) but shall have been undertaken as part of the registered research programme. In such cases, the presentation and submission may be partly in non-written, but permanent, form such as computer disks, videos, musical score or collection of artefacts.

The application for registration shall set out the form of the candidate's intended submission, and of the proposed method of assessment. The dissertation shall conform to the usual standards as given in C2.1 above and shall be of the appropriate length (see C9.1.2).

The selection and admission of candidates pursuing their research at a partner institution shall be undertaken by the partner institution. Selection and admission will be conducted in accordance with University criteria as set out in C3.1 and the relevant School Handbook. The University shall ensure that staff at the partner institution are fully conversant with these criteria and in their application and implementation.

- C2.3 A candidate may not submit material for assessment which has already been submitted for another degree at Middlesex University, or any other university, unless the material previously submitted for another degree:
- .1 forms only a minor part of the submission for this degree;
  - .2 is supplemented by new material;
  - .3 is appropriately integrated into the additional work completed for this degree;
  - .4 is clearly identified.

### **C3 ENTRY QUALIFICATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS**

- C3.1 To gain admission to the programme leading to the award of the degree of MA (by Research), MSc (by Research), or LLM (by Research), an applicant must comply with the following entry requirements:
- .1 attainment of an Honours degree (normally Second Class Honours or above) awarded by an approved university, in an appropriate subject, or an equivalent qualification, or
  - .2 attainment of an alternative qualification(s) and/or evidence of experience judged by the School Research Team or the partner institution research team as indicating a candidate's potential for research and as satisfactory for the purposes of entry to a research degree programme.
- C3.2 Admission may be subject to preliminary study including an assessment as specified by the School Research Team or the partner institution research team. In this case, enrolment for the programme will be subject to satisfactory completion of the preliminary study. The time taken for this preliminary study will *not* be counted towards the period of enrolment and registration permitted under these regulations for the completion of the degree.
- C3.3 Applicants for the degrees of MA (by Research), MSc (by Research), or LLM (by Research) may apply to spend most of the period of study away from Middlesex University or the partner institution, in their home countries, and with only short periods at Middlesex University or the partner institution. The School Research Team or the partner institution research team may approve such *distance learning* applications provided that:
- .1 it has satisfactory evidence as to the facilities available for the research both in the University or the partner institution and abroad; and
  - .2 the arrangements proposed for supervision enable frequent and substantial contact between the candidate and the supervisor based in the UK, including adequate personal contact with the supervisor. The candidate should not normally spend less than two weeks per year at the University or the partner institution <sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> The two-week per year requirement may be waived in the following circumstances: (1) where a supervisor (who is an academic member of staff at Middlesex University or the partner institution) visits the overseas institution

- C3.4 Applicants for the degrees of MA (by Research), MSc (by Research) or LLM (by Research) shall be interviewed by at least two academic staff nominated by the School Research Team or the partner institution research team.
- C3.5 Except where permission has been given by Research and Research Degrees Committee for the dissertation and oral examination to be in another language, the School Research Team or the partner institution research team shall satisfy itself that the candidate has sufficient command of the English language to complete satisfactorily the programme of work and defend the thesis in English.

#### **C4 ENROLMENT**

- C4.1 Candidates for the degree may enrol and begin<sup>2</sup> their studies at the start of each semester.
- C4.2 All candidates are required to enrol at the time of admission to the programme. For candidates at partner institutions the partner institution shall submit to the Research & Business Office all enrolment documentation for consideration and approval by the appropriate School. Students accepted shall be enrolled as candidates for a qualification of the University and shall enrol with both the University and the partner institution.
- C4.3 Only enrolled candidates are entitled to supervision and access to computing, library, and other University facilities.
- C4.4 Candidates are required to enrol annually until they have submitted their dissertations and any other written material required for the degree. In cases where major corrections or revision and re-submission are required following the first assessment, enrolment to cover this period will also be required.
- C4.5 Continued enrolment and registration (see C7.1) as a candidate for the degree of MA (by Research), MSc (by Research), or LLM (by Research) shall be subject to satisfactory progress.
- C4.6 Candidates may enrol and register to study by full-time or part-time mode. Study by distance learning may be on a full-time or part-time basis. A full-time candidate shall normally devote an average of 35 hours per week to the programme; a part-time candidate on average at least 12 hours per week.
- C4.7 Candidates may change from full-time to part-time mode, or from part-time to full-time mode. This takes effect at the start of a new term.
- C4.8 Where a candidate has discontinued the programme, the termination of enrolment and registration shall be notified to the School Research Team by the supervisor.

#### **C5 PERIODS OF STUDY**

- C5.1 For full-time candidates, the period of study shall be 12 months. For part-time students, the period of study shall be 24 months subject to the following exceptions:

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frequently or for an extended period and is able to supervise the student or (2) where a supervisor from the overseas institution has been approved by the School Research Team or the partner institution research team to undertake most of the supervision.

<sup>2</sup> Registration of the project takes place one to two months later – see 7.1 below.

- .1 Permission to extend the normal period of study by up to *one further semester* for *full-time* candidates and by up to *two further semesters* for *part-time* candidates may be granted by the School Research Team or the partner institution research team on the recommendation of the candidate's supervisor<sup>3</sup>. In such a case, the School Research Team or the partner institution research team may also extend the period within which the dissertation is to be submitted, by not more than the extension in the period of study.
  - .2 The School Research Team or the partner institution research team may permit the suspension of study on the grounds of ill-health or other good cause. The School Research Team or the partner institution research team shall specify the length of suspension which may not exceed 3 months at a time. In such a case, the School Research Team or the partner institution research team may also extend the period within which the dissertation is to be submitted, by no more than the length of the suspension.
- C5.2 Where a candidate changes from full-time to part-time study, or vice-versa, the study period shall be that for a part-time candidate. Notification of such a change shall be made in writing to the School Research Team or the partner institution research team.
- C5.3 Where there appears to be evidence that the research is proceeding exceptionally well, the School Research Team or the partner institution research team may reduce the period of study. An application for such shortening should be submitted at the same time as the application for approval of examination arrangements.

## **C6 SUPERVISION**

- C6.1 The School Research Team **or the partner institution research team** shall appoint a supervisor for each candidate, and shall make any other supervisory arrangements deemed necessary. **Supervision for candidates at partner institutions shall be provided by the partner institution. The supervisor shall be nominated by the partner institution and approved by the University.**
- C6.2 The supervisor shall be responsible for the overall direction of the work and shall see the candidate on a frequent and regular basis.
- C6.3 The School Research Team or the partner institution research team shall appoint as supervisors only those who have had experience of supervising theses for research degrees (MPhil or PhD) and/or dissertations on taught Masters degrees.
- C6.4 The supervisor shall be required to submit regular reports on the work and progress of the candidate (see **C7.2** below). Normally these will be required on a six-monthly basis.

## **C7 REGISTRATION AND PROGRESS**

- C7.1 The topic of the research shall be subject to approval by the School Research Team (or by the Associate Dean (Research) acting on its behalf) or the partner institution research team. It is the responsibility of the supervisor to ensure that brief details of the research project are passed to the School Research Team or the partner institution research team on the appropriate form within the permitted time scale. For full-time candidates, this shall not

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<sup>3</sup> Fees are payable by the candidate for these extra semesters. The full-time fee is payable for full-time study and the part-time fee for part-time study.

normally be later than one month after enrolment. For part-time students, this shall not normally be later than two months after enrolment.

- C7.2 Candidates may be required to attend lectures and seminars in support of their research<sup>4</sup>.
- C7.3 The School Research Team or the partner institution research team shall monitor the progress of all enrolled and registered candidates to establish insofar as is reasonably possible on the information available that good progress is being made and that supervision and facilities are adequate. Upon receipt of monitoring reports, the School Research Team or the partner institution research team shall take appropriate action. This may include finding an additional supervisor, recommending to the supervisor that the student transfer to a taught Masters degree (see C8 below) or, in exceptional cases, that the student be required to withdraw.

Supervisors of students at partner institutions shall also submit this report of their students' progress to the Research & Business Office. The reports shall be considered at the Annual Progression Meeting of the relevant School.

- C7.4 In all cases where the School Research Team or the partner institution research team and supervisor are agreed that a candidate's progress is unsatisfactory and that transfer to a taught degree, or withdrawal, is required, the candidate shall be informed of this fact, in writing, by the School Research Team or the partner institution research team. The candidate shall be given a reasonable time scale (not normally less than 2 months for those studying full-time, and not normally less than 4 months for those studying part-time) for improvements to be made. Where these improvements are not made by the stated date, the candidate shall be informed in writing by the School Research Team or the partner institution research team that a decision has been made to terminate the enrolment, or to advise a transfer to a taught Masters degree.
- C7.5 A candidate who is required to withdraw may use the Complaints and Grievance Procedure for Research Students.
- C7.6 Where a candidate is prevented by ill-health or other cause from making progress, enrolment may be temporarily suspended (see C5.1.2 above).
- C7.7 Where a candidate is making good progress but cannot meet the submission date, extra time may be granted (see C5.1.1 above).
- C7.8 Where a candidate, or the University or the partner institution, wishes the dissertation to remain confidential for a period of time after completion of the work, application for approval shall normally be made to Research and Research Degrees Committee at the time of registration (C7.1 above). In cases where the need for confidentiality emerges at a later stage, a special application for the dissertation to remain confidential after submission shall be made immediately to Research and Research Degrees Committee. The period approved shall normally not exceed two years from the date of the oral assessment.

## **C8 TRANSFER FROM MA (BY RESEARCH) OR MSc (BY RESEARCH) OR LLM (BY RESEARCH) TO A RELATED TAUGHT MASTERS PROGRAMME**

- C8.1 Transfer from the MA (by Research) or from the MSc (by Research) or from the LLM (by Research) to a related taught Masters programme may be requested by a candidate, or

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<sup>4</sup> No additional fee will be required of the candidate for this. The fee already paid by the candidate for the MA/MSc by Research programme will cover the extra lectures and seminars.

recommended by the candidate's supervisor at any time prior to submission of the thesis. If the candidate does not agree with the recommendation of his/her supervisor, he/she may use the Complaints and Grievance Procedure for Research Students.

## **C9 THE DISSERTATION**

### **C9.1 Word Length and language of the Dissertation**

C9.1.1 The maximum number of words in the dissertation, excluding supplementary material such as tables, diagrams, appendices, references, and the bibliography, shall be as follows:

For the MA (by Research): 30,000 words;

For the LLM (by Research): 30,000 words;

For the MSc (by Research): 20,000 words.

Candidates must not exceed the word limit stated.

C9.1.2 Where the dissertation is accompanied by work in non-written form and this work forms the point of reference and principal mode of enquiry for the dissertation, the dissertation shall normally be no more than:

15,000 words (for the MA (by Research));

15,000 words (for the LLM (by Research));

12,000 words (for the MSc (by Research))

C9.1.3 The dissertation shall be written in English except where permission has been given by Research and Research Degrees Committee for another language to be used owing to the nature of the subject. The abstract shall always be in English.

### **C9.2 Submission of the Dissertation**

C9.2.1 A candidate's responsibilities in respect of submission are detailed in section A9 of these Regulations.

C9.2.2 Two copies must be submitted for assessment, presented in accordance with the requirements given in the Examination Handbook for Research Degrees.

C9.2.3 A candidate may submit a dissertation on two occasions only, once initially, and on one further occasion if Research and Research Degrees Committee, based on the recommendation of the assessors, permits the dissertation to be revised and resubmitted.

C9.2.4 Except as provided for in Regulation C9.2.4 below, a candidate shall be expected to submit the dissertation after completing the period of study set out in Regulation C5.1 above, and must submit the dissertation before the expiration of the maximum period of study set out in Regulation C5.1.1 above.

C9.2.5 On the written recommendation of the supervisor, and with the agreement of the School Research Team or the partner institution research team, a candidate may be permitted to submit the dissertation before the expiration of the period of study as set out in Regulation C5.3.

- C9.2.5 A candidate shall be deemed to have withdrawn owing to lapse of time if the dissertation has not been submitted before the completion of the maximum period of study set out in Regulation C5.1, and no application for an extension of time has been received by the School Research Team or the partner institution research team. Application from the candidate to allow submission after this time must be made to Research and Research Degrees Committee which shall grant permission for this only in exceptional circumstances.

### **C9.3 Format for Submission**

- C9.3.1 The dissertation shall be typed on A4 paper, using double or one-and-a-half spacing.
- C9.3.2 The dissertation shall be presented for examination in perfect-bound format and with text on the recto side only. The pages shall be numbered consecutively through the main text including photographs and/or diagrams presented as full pages.
- C9.3.3 An abstract of the work of approximately 300 words shall be bound in each copy immediately after the title page.
- C9.3.4 The title page of the dissertation shall have the title of the work, the candidate's name, the degree title (either MA (by Research), or MSc (by Research) or LLM (by Research) and the year in which the dissertation is presented.

## **C10 ASSESSMENT - GENERAL**

- C10.1 The assessment for the degree of MA (by Research), and MSc (by Research) and LLM (by Research) shall have two stages: Firstly the submission and preliminary assessment of the dissertation, and secondly its defence by oral, or approved alternative, assessment.
- C10.2 A candidate shall normally be assessed orally on the programme of work and field of study in which the programme lies. Where for reasons of sickness, disability, or comparable valid cause, the Research and Research Degrees Committee is satisfied that a candidate would be under a serious disadvantage if required to undergo an oral assessment, an alternative form of assessment, or modification to the oral assessment procedure, may be approved. Such approval shall not be given on the grounds that the candidate's knowledge of the language in which the dissertation is presented is inadequate.
- C10.3 The oral assessment shall normally be held in the UK. In special cases, the Research and Research Degrees Committee may give approval for the assessment to take place abroad.
- C10.4 The Research and Research Degrees Committee shall make decisions on the reports and recommendations of the assessors in respect of the candidate. The power to confer the degree shall rest with the Academic Board of the University.
- C10.5 Where evidence of academic dishonesty in the preparation or the dissertation, or other irregularities in the conduct of the assessment, come to light subsequent to the recommendation of the assessors, the Research and Research Degrees Committee shall consider the matter, if necessary in consultation with the assessors, and take appropriate action in accordance with the University regulations.
- C10.6 The Research and Research Degrees Committee shall ensure that all assessments are conducted, and the recommendations of the assessors, are presented wholly in accordance with University regulations. In any instance where the Committee is made aware of a failure to comply with the procedures of the assessment process, it may declare the assessment null and void, and appoint new assessors.

- 10.8 In accordance with the Data Protection Act and University policy, candidates and supervisors are permitted to see all reports written by assessors. This fact shall be made clear to assessors at the time of their appointment.

## **C11 ASSESSMENT AND ASSESSORS**

### **C11.1 Application for Assessment**

- C11.1.1 No later than 3 months before the expected date of submission, the candidate's supervisor shall, via the School Research Team or the partner institution research team, propose assessment arrangements to Research and Research Degrees Committee for approval.
- C11.1.2 The assessment arrangements shall be proposed on the appropriate proforma and shall name the assessors and the Chair, and shall give the precise title of the dissertation. Where applicable, the name(s) of observers shall be given. All those persons so listed shall attend the oral assessment. (No other person may attend except with the unanimous approval of the Chair, the assessors, and the candidate).

Chairs for examinations of candidates at partner institutions are, initially, University staff. This responsibility may later be delegated to staff at the partner institution. Chairs will be appropriately trained by the University. Chairs from partner institutions will be approved by the Research and Research Degrees Committee.

### **C11.2 Assessors**

- C11.2.1 At least one external<sup>5</sup> assessor, and one internal<sup>6</sup> assessor shall be appointed for each candidate. Partner institutions nominate internal and external assessors for approval by the University's Research & Research Degrees Committee.
- C11.2.2 The appointed external assessor shall have substantial<sup>7</sup> experience of assessing research degrees (MPhil or PhD) and/or the oral assessment of taught Masters dissertations.
- C11.2.3 A candidate's supervisor shall not be the internal assessor.
- C11.2.4 Where the candidate is on the permanent staff of the University or the partner institution, there shall be two external assessors.

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<sup>5</sup> An external assessor is independent of the University or the partner institution. He/she must not have acted previously as the candidate's supervisor or adviser. Former Middlesex or the partner institution staff will not normally be approved as external assessors until 3 years after the termination of their employment with the University.

<sup>6</sup> An internal assessor is defined as an assessor who is: (a) a member of the University or the partner institution staff or (b) a Visiting Professor, or an Emeritus Professor, or an Honorary Professor.

<sup>7</sup> 'Substantial' examining experience is normally taken to be the examination of 2 such degrees.

## **C12 FIRST ASSESSMENT**

### **C12.1 Assessors' Role and Responsibilities**

- C12.1.1 The assessors shall be given no less than 4 weeks to read and evaluate the dissertation. A shorter time than this is permissible only with the assessors' agreement.
- C12.1.2 Each assessor shall prepare an independent report on the dissertation at least one week before the oral assessment takes place.
- C12.1.3 Where the assessors are in agreement, they shall also prepare a joint report following the oral assessment, taking into account the original independent reports, and the candidate's performance in the oral assessment, and they shall, where possible, make a joint recommendation.
- C12.1.4 The preliminary reports and joint recommendation of the examiners should together provide sufficiently detailed comments on the scope and quality of the work to enable the Research and Research Degrees Committee to satisfy itself that the recommendation chosen in Regulation C12.2.1 or C12.2.2 is correct.
- C12.1.5 In case of non-agreement between the assessors, each shall prepare a separate report.
- C12.1.6 The assessors shall also prepare a detailed list of amendments and/or revisions for the candidate on the appropriate proforma.

### **C12.2 Assessors' Recommendation**

- C12.2.1 Following the initial submission and assessment of the candidate's dissertation for the degree, and where the candidate has satisfied the requirements for the degree as set out in Regulation C2.1, the assessors shall recommend to Research and Research Degrees Committee one of the following, based on the Assessment Criteria for Level 4 study:
- (a) that the candidate be awarded the degree of MA (by Research) or MSc (by Research) or LLM (by Research) with a *pass*; or
  - (b) that the candidate be awarded the degree of MA (by Research) or MSc (by Research) or LLM (by Research) with *merit*; or
  - (c) that the candidate be awarded the degree of MA (by Research) or MSc (by Research) or LLM (by Research) with *distinction*.
- C12.2.2 Following the initial submission and assessment of the candidate's dissertation for the degree, and where the candidate has *failed to satisfy* the requirements of the degree as set out in Regulation C2.1, the assessors shall make one of the following recommendations to Research and Research Degrees Committee:
- (a) that the candidate be awarded the degree of MA (by Research) or MSc (by Research) or LLM (by Research) after he/she has made minor corrections<sup>8</sup> to the dissertation to the satisfaction of the internal examiner;

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<sup>8</sup> Minor corrections are matters which do not alter the results and/or conclusions of the dissertation in any significant way. They may be errors or omissions of a clerical nature, or minor changes in phraseology or small improvements in descriptions or explanations, corrections of faults in subsidiary arguments.

- (b) that the candidate be awarded the degree of MA (by Research) or MSc (by Research) or LLM (by Research) after he/she has made major corrections<sup>9</sup> to the dissertation to the satisfaction of both examiners;
- (c) that the dissertation be referred<sup>10</sup> to the candidate for revision and re-assessment;
- (d) that the dissertation be rejected without opportunity for resubmission and the candidate be not awarded the degree.

C12.2.3 Assessors may indicate informally their recommendation on the result of the assessment to the candidate but they shall make it clear that the decision rests with Research and Research Degrees Committee.

### **C12.3 Research and Research Degrees Committee**

C12.3.1 Where the assessors' recommendations are not unanimous (see Regulation C12.1.5 above), Research and Research Degrees Committee may:

- (a) accept the recommendation of the external assessor; or
- (b) require the appointment of an additional external assessor

C12.3.2 Where an additional external assessor is appointed under Regulation C12.3.1(b), he/she shall prepare an independent preliminary report on the dissertation and, if considered necessary, may conduct a further oral assessment. This assessor shall not be informed of the recommendations of the other assessors. On receipt of the report from the additional assessor, Research and Research Degrees Committee shall complete the examination as set out in Regulation C10.4.

C12.3.3 Where Research and Research Degrees Committee decides that the dissertation be rejected with no opportunity for re-submission, the assessors shall prepare an agreed statement on the deficiencies of the dissertation, and the reasons for their recommendation. This statement shall be forwarded to Research and Research Degrees Committee by the Chair of the oral assessment.

C12.3.4 A candidate who is debarred from further assessment shall be given the opportunity to submit an appeal in accordance with the University's Appeals Procedure for Research Students.

### **C13 TIMESCALES FOR CORRECTIONS AND RESUBMISSION**

C13.1 Minor corrections shall normally be completed by the candidate within one month of the date on which the letter informing the candidate of the result is issued by the University Research Office, unless further time is permitted by the assessors. Minor corrections shall be subject to the approval of the internal assessor.

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<sup>9</sup> Major corrections are matters which are in excess of minor corrections but not, in the opinion of the assessor, sufficient to require the candidate to re-submit the full work for second assessment. Such modifications may involve re-writing sections, correction of calculations, or clarification and amendment of arguments.

<sup>10</sup> Revision and re-submission reflects that substantial revisions are required to make the dissertation acceptable, involving, for example, the re-writing of large sections, or the introduction of significant new material, or of further experiments, calculations or research, or profound correction of an argument.

- C13.2 Major corrections shall normally be completed by the candidate within 6 months of the date on which the letter informing the candidate of the result is issued by the University Research Office, unless further time is permitted by the assessors. Major corrections will be subject to the approval of both internal and external assessors. During this time the candidate shall remain an enrolled and registered student of the University.
- C13.3 Revision and resubmission of the dissertation shall normally be completed by the candidate within 12 months of the date on which the letter informing the candidate of the result is issued by the [Research & Business Office](#), unless further time is permitted by the assessors. Revisions must be approved by both internal and external assessors. During this time the candidate shall remain an enrolled and registered student of the University.

## **C14 SECOND ASSESSMENT**

- C14.1 A second assessment will be permitted where the dissertation was referred (see C12.2.2(c) above). Normally only one re-assessment will be permitted by Research and Research Degrees Committee.
- C14.2 Research and Research Degrees Committee may require that an additional external assessor be appointed for a re-assessment.
- C14.3 Re-assessment may be with or without an oral assessment as determined by the assessors.
- C14.4 In all cases of re-assessment, the assessors shall prepare an independent report on the revised dissertation.
- C14.5 Following the second submission and assessment of the candidate's dissertation (with or without an oral assessment), and where the candidate has satisfied the requirements for the degree as set out in Regulation C2.1, the assessors shall recommend to Research and Research Degrees Committee that the candidate be awarded the degree of MA (by Research) or MSc (by Research) or LLM (by Research) with a pass.
- C14.6 Following the second submission and assessment of the candidate's dissertation (with or without an oral assessment), and where the candidate has failed to satisfy the requirements of the degree as set out in Regulation C2.1, the assessors shall recommend to Research and Research Degrees Committee either that:
- (a) that the candidate be awarded the degree of MA (by Research) or MSc (by Research) or LLM (by Research) after completion of minor corrections made to the satisfaction of the internal examiner; or
  - (b) that the dissertation be rejected without opportunity for re-submission and the candidate be not awarded the degree for which the dissertation was re-submitted.
- C14.7 Where the assessors' recommendations are not unanimous, Research and Research Degrees Committee may:
- (a) accept the recommendation of the external assessor; or
  - (b) require the appointment of an additional external assessor.
- C14.8 Where an additional external assessor is appointed under Regulation C14.6(b), he/she shall prepare an independent preliminary report on the dissertation and, if considered necessary, may conduct a further oral assessment. The assessor shall not be informed of the recommendation of the other assessors.

C14.9 Where Research and Research Degrees Committee decides that the degree be not awarded, the assessors shall prepare an agreed statement on the deficiencies of the dissertation, and the reason for their recommendation which shall be forwarded to the candidate by the University Research Officer.

## **C15 LODGING THE DISSERTATION IN THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY**

C15.1 All candidates of the University and of the partner institutions who have been awarded the degree of MA (by Research), or MSc (by Research), or LLM (by Research) shall submit to the Research and Business Office one copy of the dissertation in a suitable electronic storage medium (as decided by the University) together with a completed and signed Middlesex University Research Repository Agreement Form. Candidates shall not normally be awarded a degree certificate until the electronic dissertation and completed form have been received by the University.

C15.2 The electronic copy submitted to the University shall become the property of the University. Copyright in the dissertation 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 research undertaken.

C15.3 Following receipt of the electronic copy of the dissertation (and subject to regulation C15.4 below), the Research and Business Office shall lodge this in the University Library for inclusion in the Middlesex University Research Repository. Partner institution dissertations shall also be lodged in the Repository.

C15.4 Where Research and Research Degrees Committee has agreed that the confidential nature of the candidate's work is such as to preclude the dissertation being made freely available in the University Library, the dissertation 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 be made available only to those who were directly involved in the project. Candidates shall sign the Middlesex University Research Repository Agreement Form but the dissertation shall not be included in the Repository until after the approved time period has elapsed.

## **SECTION D**

### **REGULATIONS FOR THE AWARD OF HIGHER DOCTORATES**

## **D1 INTRODUCTION**

The University awards higher doctorates for work of high distinction which constitutes an original, and sustained significant contribution to the advancement of knowledge or the application of knowledge or both and where it establishes that the applicant is a leading authority in the field of study concerned.

## **D2 AWARDS**

D2.1 Applications may be made for the following higher doctorates:

Doctor of Laws (LLD)  
Doctor of Letters (DLitt)  
Doctor of Science (DSc)  
Doctor of Technology (DTech)

Applicants are required to state the higher doctorate for which they wish their work to be considered. Applications should initially be made to the Research & Business Office.

D2.2 The work submitted must be of high distinction, must constitute an original and significant and sustained contribution to the advancement of knowledge or to the application of knowledge or to both and must establish that the applicant is a leading authority in the field or fields of study concerned. The degree of Doctor of Technology is the appropriate award where the applicant's contribution has been principally to developments in the application of knowledge.

D2.3 Applicants should normally be:

- a holders of at least seven years' standing, of a first degree awarded or by a university in the United Kingdom or of a qualification of equivalent standard; or
- b holders, of at least four years' standing, of a higher degree awarded or by a university in the United Kingdom or of a qualification of equivalent standard.

D2.4 Applicants must submit three copies of the work on which the application is based. The submission may take the form of books, contributions to journals, patent specifications, reports, specifications and design studies and may also include other relevant evidence of original work. All material, other than books, must be secured in one hard-backed folder, or more if necessary, each containing a title and contents page. An application shall state which part of the submission if any, has been submitted for another academic award. The contents of a submission must be in English unless specific permission to the contrary has been given by the University.

D2.5 In addition to the copies of the work on which the application is based, applicants must submit one copy of each of the following, all of which must be typewritten:

- a a statement of not more than 1000 words setting out the applicant's view of the nature and significance of the work submitted;
- b a full statement of the extent of the applicant's contribution to work submitted involving joint authorship or other types of collaboration. The senior author (if not the applicant) would normally be required to endorse such a statement.

- c a statement as to whether any of the above works had been submitted for any other degree awarded to the candidate; work submitted for a similar degree of another university may not form a substantial part of the submission.

D2.6 The University shall retain on open access one copy of the full documentation submitted in support of an application which is successful.

D2.7 On submission of an application accompanied by the appropriate fee the Research and Research Degrees Committee shall, by establishing a sub committee, consider whether a case for proceeding to a formal examination of the application has been established, taking whatever advice it considers appropriate.

If satisfied that such a case has been established the Research and Research Degrees Committee will submit the application to two assessors who shall not be members of the University or hold any appointment in the University each of whom shall make an independent report to the University. In case of disagreement between the assessors the University may appoint a third assessor. The assessors shall be of high national standing in the research field in which the candidate is to be assessed.

### **D3 ASSESSMENT**

D3.1 The assessors shall determine whether the works submitted show that the candidate has personally made a substantial and sustained contribution to knowledge and has become a signed authority in the field of fields concerned.

D3.2 An assessor may seek additional information from the candidate by writing to the Chair of the University's Research and Research Degrees Committee.

D3.3 Each assessor shall report independently his or her conclusion to the Research and Research Degrees Committee and shall recommend whether the Degree should be conferred.

D3.4 The Research and Research Degrees Committee shall consider the reports of the assessors and determine whether the Degree should be conferred. If it agrees it shall so recommend to the Academic Board whose decision shall be final.

D3.5 Research and Research Degrees Committee may, if it sees fit, appoint an additional assessor and consider all the assessors reports before approving its recommendation to the Academic Board.

### **D4 DISPOSAL OF WORKS**

The disposal of the copies of the submission shall be at the discretion of the University but normally two of the three copies shall be returned to the candidate. If the Degree is conferred one copy of the submission shall be retained in the University Library.

The candidate may, however, direct that access to any unpublished work that formed part of the submission shall be restricted to those persons having written permission of the candidate. If it is desired to extend the restriction beyond two years application must be made by writing to the Research & Business Office.

## **SECTION E**

### **APPEALS PROCEDURE FOR RESEARCH DEGREE CANDIDATES**

E1 Research degree candidates have the right to appeal to Academic Board against decisions taken by 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), 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 full-time, part-time, 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.

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

- .1 were circumstances affecting the candidate's performance of which the examiners were not aware at the viva-voca 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);
- .2 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;
- .3 is evidence of unfair or improper assessment on the part of one or more of the examiners.

E2 Candidates may not challenge the academic judgement of the examiners and appeals made on this basis will be rejected.

E3 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.

E4 A candidate wishing to appeal should give notice of his/her 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.

E5 Candidates must submit a written case for the review within a further month from the date of giving notice of the intention to appeal.

E6 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.

E7 The procedure for considering an appeal shall be as follows:

- .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)
- .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 subsequent transfer from MPhil to PhD registration etc. of a candidate by a member of a Research and Research Degrees Committee or a School/Institute Research Committee does not constitute involvement.

.3 the Review Panel shall consider the evidence which shall include:

- the candidate's written case;
- a report prepared by the Academic Registrar;
- the examiners' preliminary and final reports;
- the candidate's thesis.

E8 The candidate shall have the right to be heard in person and to speak to his/her written case. S/he may be accompanied by a person of her/his choice, but may not seek legal representation at a hearing of the Panel.

E9 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.

E10 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.

E11 Candidates shall receive a written statement of the reasons for failure prepared by examiners after the examination.

E12 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 1 above. It shall establish this principally by enquiring whether the final decision by the examiners was fair and sound.

E13 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.

E14 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.

E15 The Panel may need to meet on several occasions before determining its recommendations to Research and Research Degrees Committee.

E16 The examiners shall be informed of the outcome of the Panel's deliberations and of the decision of Research and Research Degrees Committee.

E17 The Appeal Review Panel shall make one of the following recommendations:

- .1 that the appeal be rejected by the Research and Research Degrees Committee;
- .2 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;
- .3 that the Research and Research Degree Committees 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 E1.1 to E1.3 above.

- E18 The Research and Research Degrees Committee or Chair of this Committee shall receive the recommendations of the Review Panel and take appropriate action.
- E19 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.
- E20 Should the candidate wish to take the matter externally, to the Higher Education Independent Adjudicator (OIA), he/she must:
- Step 1: view his/her appeal file (by contacting the Secretary to Research and Research Degrees Committee, Middlesex University Research office);
- Step2: put any concerns about the appeal outcome, or its conduct, or the appeals procedures in writing to the Secretary of 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.
- E21 Within 3 months of receiving notification that the internal procedures of the University have been completed, the candidate may approach the Higher Education Independent Adjudicator (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, UK. Email enquiries may be sent to: [enquiries@oiahe.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@oiahe.org.uk). The website address is: [www.oiahe.org.uk](http://www.oiahe.org.uk).

## **SECTION F**

### **COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES**

## **F1 INTRODUCTION**

- F1.1 These procedures are for use by any student of the University or of a partner institution, 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 full-time, part-time, or distance learning, 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.
- F1.2 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.
- F1.3 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; and
  - complaints which fall within the remit of the University's student disciplinary procedures.
- F1.4 Complaints against Middlesex University Student's Union are dealt with by the Union.
- F1.5 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 of a student's registration for a research degree.

## **F2 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, 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 stage 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.

### F3 PROCEDURES

F3.1 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 and/or other members of the supervisory team.

F3.2 **Informal Stage 1:** In the first instance, students who wish to make a complaint shall discuss it with their School 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

F3.3 Assuming it is agreed that the complaint shall be progressed through these general procedures, the School Associate Dean (Research) 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 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, ten working days. If the complaint directly involves the School Associate Dean (Research), it shall proceed directly to Informal Stage 2.

F3.4 **Informal Stage 2:** If the student is dissatisfied with the result of Informal Stage 1, or if the complaint directly involves the School Associate Dean (Research), the complaint shall be sent in writing to the Dean of School 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 Dean of School, it shall proceed directly to the Formal Stage. The Dean 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.

In the case of student complaints at partner institutions, the informal stages above should be handled within the institution by the staff members carrying out equivalent roles but following these procedures and time scales. Where the complaint cannot be resolved informally, the matter should be referred on to the University so that the formal stages below can be used.

F3.5 **Formal Stage:** If a student is dissatisfied with the result of the two informal stages, he/she 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 he/she is 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; and shall
- 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.

F3.6 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research and Enterprise, having fully investigated the complaint over a period not normally exceeding ten working days from its receipt, shall decide whether:

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

F3.7 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; and shall,
- if the recommendations are agreed, ensure that they are implemented in full within the agreed time period.

### **F3.8 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, he/she may appeal to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic. The student shall submit the appeal in writing within ten 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; or
- dismiss the case, giving reasons in writing; or
- seek agreement to an alternative set of recommendations; or
- 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.

### **F3.9 The Complaints Panel**

#### **F3.9.1 *Membership***

The Research Student Complaints Panel shall involve four persons:

- The 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 about which the complaint is being made and who has had no connection with the student at any time.
- A student representative appointed by the students union.
- The Academic Registrar (Secretary)

#### **F3.9.2 Rights of the Parties**

- F3.9.2.1 The candidate shall have the right to be heard in person and to speak his or her written case to the Panel.
- F3.9.2.2 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.
- F3.9.2.3 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.
- F3.9.2.4 The Complaints Panel shall have the right to question any member of the University staff including the student's supervisors and the School Associate Dean (Research).
- F3.9.2.5 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.
- F3.9.2.6 The student and staff members shall have the right to introduce documents to the panel. (see F3.9.3.2 below)

#### **F3.9.3 Procedures in Preparation for the Hearing**

- F3.9.3.1 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.
- F3.9.3.2 Written statements and other documentation to be copied for the hearing, submitted by the student or academic staff (see F3.9.2.6 above) shall be sent to the Academic Registrar normally within 5 working days of the date of the letter giving details the hearing. (F3.9.3.1 above)
- F3.9.3.3 The Academic Registrar shall ensure that all such statements and documentation are circulated no less than 5 working days to the other party and to all members of the panel.

F3.9.3.4 If the student or staff member(s) involved intend to be accompanied (see F3.9.2.3 above), 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.

#### **F3.9.4 Conduct of the Panel**

- The Panel shall meet in private.
- The Panel shall 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.
- The Panel shall 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.

#### **F3.9.5 Outcome**

The Academic Registrar shall send the report of the hearing to the Dean of School, and School Associate Dean (Research).

The Academic Registrar shall communicate the decision of the Complaints Panel to the candidate setting out the reasons for the decision.

The Dean of School shall write a report identifying the action taken by the School, normally within 6 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.

### **F4 OFFICE OF THE INDEPENDENT ADJUDICATOR FOR HIGHER EDUCATION (OIA)**

F4.1 Should the student wish to take the matter externally, to the Higher Education Independent Adjudicator (OIA), he/she must:

Step 1: view his/her complaints file (by contacting the Secretary of 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 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.

F4.2 Within 3 months of receiving notification that the internal procedures of the University have been completed, the student may approach the Higher Education Independent Adjudicator (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, 38-50 King's Road, Reading, RG1 3AA, UK. Email enquiries may be sent to: [enquiries@oiahe.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@oiahe.org.uk).

## F5 **NOTES**

### F5.1 In these procedures:

- a reference to a research student is taken to mean any student of the University or of a partner institution 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 full-time, part-time, distance learning, 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 (e.g. 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.

### F5.2 **Interpretation:**

- the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise) is responsible for interpreting these procedures and his/her decision shall be final except in cases where the interpretation involves a complaint against the Deputy Vice-chancellor (Research and Enterprise) in which case interpretation of the procedures shall be the responsibility of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic).
- '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.