

**Regulations and Procedures Governing the  
Award of the Degrees of:**

**Doctor of Philosophy by Published Work**

**and**

**Doctor of Philosophy by Practice**

## 1. Principles

- 1.1 The Regulations and Procedures governing the award of the degrees of Doctor of Philosophy by published work and Doctor of Philosophy by practice are supplementary to and should be read in conjunction with the University's **Research Degree Regulations**.
- 1.2 The University of Bolton (hereinafter referred to as the University) shall award the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) on the basis of published work or professional or creative practice to registered candidates, provided that there is clear evidence to the satisfaction of the examiners that the candidate has carried out a critical investigation and evaluation of an appropriate topic(s) or theme(s) which has led to an independent and original contribution to knowledge and demonstrated an understanding of research methods appropriate to the chosen field.
- 1.3 The University shall ensure that research degrees by published work or practice are consistent and comparable in standard with research degrees awarded following an approved programme of supervised research and with research degrees granted and conferred throughout higher education in the United Kingdom.
- 1.4 Candidates may submit for the degree in any field of study provided that:
  - (a) the submitted works constitute a coherent programme of published research, as opposed to a series of learned but possibly disconnected papers, or
  - (b) the practice can be adequately evidenced as making an original and substantial contribution to knowledge through professional or creative practice and
  - (c) the submitted works or evidence of practice are capable of being presented for assessment by appropriate examiners.
- 1.6 Where any work submitted for the award has been carried out in collaboration with others, a statement clearly indicating the relative contribution of such other persons must be submitted with the candidate's application for registration and with the final submission.
- 1.7 None of the publications or evidence of practice submitted for the award may normally have been submitted for any other degree awarded to the candidate and a declaration to this effect must be submitted by the candidate at the time of application for registration and with the final submission.
- 1.8 Normally candidates must present and defend the submitted work in English. Any application to vary this should be made to the Board of

Studies for Research Degrees prior to initial registration. The Board will consider such applications on their individual merits.

- 1.9 Schools, Research Centres, Research Institutes or individual subject areas may publish additional guidance on the nature of published work or practice at doctoral level in relevant disciplines.

## **2. Eligibility**

The University will consider applications for registration for the degree of PhD on the basis of published work or practice from members of staff of the University and persons not associated with the University who are appropriately qualified and in a position to undertake doctoral level study. Candidates for Route B (see below) will normally be employed in posts which enable or require them to undertake research or professional or creative practice at an appropriately advanced level and to have held such a post for at least two years. International candidates will be required to demonstrate that their command of English is of an acceptable standard.

The Board of Studies for Research Degrees will consider each application for registration individually and according to its own merit.

## **3. Routes of Study**

For both the PhD by Publication and the PhD by Practice there will be two possible routes to assessment.

### ***Route A***

Route A is retrospective and is designed for candidates who already have a portfolio of publications or substantial and evidenced involvement in a project or projects which develop(s) innovative professional or creative practice. The period of registration (6-12 months) is intended to allow candidates, with the support of a suitable supervisory team, to prepare a critical commentary of at least 10,000 words which contextualizes, analyses and discusses the portfolio and sets out the case for it to be considered an original and independent contribution to knowledge.

### ***Route B***

Route B is normally work-based. It enables candidates who do not yet have a suitable portfolio of publications or evidence of professional or creative practice to create that portfolio and also a critical commentary of at least 10,000 words which contextualizes, analyses and discusses the portfolio and sets out the case for it to be considered an original and independent contribution to knowledge, under supervision and with appropriate support. Candidates for Route B should hold a professional role which enables or requires them to undertake research, professional or creative work at an appropriate level over a period of between 3 and 4 years.

## **4. Application and Registration**

## **Route A**

For Route A, applicants will submit an application form in the normal way for admission to the University as a research student (<http://data.bolton.ac.uk/aqas/CandProformas.htm>). In addition, candidates will submit a curriculum vitae. Applications must refer to points i-iv below, although they are not expected to be in their final form at this stage.

Consideration of the application by the relevant School or Research Institute or Centre will focus on whether the previous and any planned published work or professional or creative practice is, *prima facie*, likely to lead to a successful application for registration and is in a field of study where there is appropriate supervisory expertise available in the University. Consideration of applications will therefore require scrutiny of the relevant evidence of publication or professional practice, as well as the usual evidence obtained via interview, references, etc.

Once accepted and enrolled as a postgraduate student by research, the candidate, with supervisory assistance, will submit an application for registration to the Board of Studies for Research Degrees using form R1 (PW) for the PhD by published work or R1 (Prac) for the PhD by professional or creative practice, available from the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Unit.

The registration proposal shall include the following:

- i. A list of published works on which the application for registration is based or a description of the practice on which the portfolio will be based together with an explanation of the nature of the evidence which the portfolio will contain.
- ii. An abstract, normally not exceeding 1500 words, detailing where and when the research or practice on which the portfolio is based was undertaken and summarising the contribution to the field of study represented by the evidence in the portfolio.
- iii. Where any work has been published or carried out in collaboration with other persons, a statement signed by the candidate and co-authors or collaborators specifying the extent of the relative contributions of each to the work. (Note: the University reserves the right to consult with any of the co-authors or collaborators in respect of this statement).
- iv. A signed declaration confirming whether or not any of the works on which the application is based has formed part of any submission for any other degree awarded to the candidate. (Note: works submitted for any degree awarded to the candidate shall not normally be permissible for inclusion in the candidate's submission for award of the degree of PhD).

The Board of Studies for Research Degrees will undertake a rigorous scrutiny of the registration application and will expect to see evidence that the candidate has conducted a critical investigation and evaluation leading to an independent and original contribution to knowledge and demonstrated an understanding of appropriate research methods. Specifically, the Board will wish to be assured that the publications or portfolio of evidence together with the critical appraisal which will constitute the final submission is likely to meet the required standard for the award of the degree of PhD, further definition of which is provided in the University's Research Degree Regulations.

### **Route B**

For Route B, applicants will submit an application form in the normal way for admission to the University as a research student (<http://data.bolton.ac.uk/aqas/CandProformas.htm>). In addition, candidates will submit a curriculum vitae. Applications must refer to points i-iv below, although they are not expected to be in their final form at this stage.

Consideration of the application by the relevant School or Research Institute or Centre will focus on whether any previous and the planned published work or professional or creative practice is, *prima facie*, likely to lead to a successful application for registration and is in a field of study where there is appropriate supervisory expertise available in the University.

Once accepted and enrolled as a postgraduate student by research, the candidate, with supervisory assistance, will submit an application for registration to the Board of Studies for Research Degrees using form R1 (PW) for the PhD by published work or R1 (Prac) for the PhD by professional or creative practice, available from the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Unit.

The registration proposal shall include the following:

- i. A list of any already published works or already completed professional or creative practice relevant to the proposal.
- ii. A list of the proposed publications on which the application for registration is based, or a description of proposed professional or creative practice on which the application is based together with an explanation of the nature of the evidence which the portfolio will contain.
- iii. An abstract, normally not exceeding 1500 words, describing the research or practice on which the published works or portfolio will be based and summarising the contribution to the field of study represented by the published works or the practice represented by the evidence in the portfolio.
- iv. Where any work has been published or carried out in collaboration with other persons, a statement signed by the candidate and co-authors or

collaborators specifying the extent of the relative contributions of each to the work. (Note: the University reserves the right to consult with any of the co-authors or collaborators in respect of this statement).

- v. A signed declaration confirming whether or not any of the works on which the application is based has formed part of any submission for any other degree awarded to the candidate. (Note: works submitted for any degree awarded to the candidate shall not normally be permissible for inclusion in the candidate's submission for award of the degree of PhD).

The Board of Studies for Research Degrees will undertake a rigorous scrutiny of the registration application and will expect to see evidence that the candidate is capable of conducting a critical investigation and evaluation leading to an independent and original contribution to knowledge and has or is in a position to acquire an understanding of appropriate research methods. The Board will also wish to be convinced that the School/Research Institute or Centre has in place suitable support and a programme of appropriate training for the candidate. Specifically, the Board will wish to be assured that the publications or portfolio of evidence together with the critical appraisal which will constitute the final submission is likely to meet the required standard for the award of the degree of PhD, further definition of which is provided in the University's Research Degree Regulations.

## 5. Registration Period

If the Board of Studies for Research Degrees is satisfied that the applicant is eligible to be a candidate for the award of the degree, then the applicant shall be enrolled and registered as a candidate for the degree of PhD at the University of Bolton.

### **Route A**

The normal minimum and maximum periods of registration for candidates wishing to register for the award of the degree of PhD by published work or practice by Route A will be six months and twelve months respectively.

### **Route B**

The normal minimum and maximum periods of registration for candidates wishing to register for the award of the degree of PhD by published work or practice by Route B will be three years and four years respectively for full time students and six and seven years for part time students. The minimum and maximum periods for student who move from full time to part time status or vice versa will be calculated *pro rata*. Students who already have substantial research experience, or who have already completed a significant body of relevant research or who are making exceptional progress may apply to the Board of Studies for Research Degrees for permission to submit before the end of the normal period of registration.

## 6. Supervision

For the duration of the period of registration, a candidate for the award of PhD by published work or practice shall have at least two supervisors. One supervisor who is a member of staff of the University shall be the Director of Studies. Other supervisor(s) may be internal or external to the University. For candidates for Route B, at least one member of the supervisory team should be a practitioner engaged in the same profession or creative activity as the candidate. Where this is not possible, there should be mentor/advisor who is. The supervisory team shall be proposed by the School, Research Institute or Centre following consultation with the candidate, and will be subject to approval by the Board of Studies for Research Degrees. The role of the supervisors will be to oversee the compilation or creation and/or compilation of the items comprising the submission and to advise and assist in the preparation of a critical appraisal of at least 10,000 words which, together with the published work or portfolio of evidence of practice, shall form the final submission. The supervisory team shall also be responsible for attending to the various procedures relating to quality assurance and arrangements for the examination as detailed in the **Research Degree Regulations**, the **Code of Practice for Research Students and their Supervisors** and the **Quality Assurance Procedures for Research Degrees**.

## 7. Presentation of the Submission

After the minimum and before the end of the maximum period of registration the candidate shall present three copies of the published works or portfolio of evidence of practice and accompanying critical appraisal to the Academic Quality Administrator (Research) in the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Unit, having given notice of the intention to submit using the appropriate form. The final submission must include the following:

- 1 A title page which shall give the following information:
  - i. an appropriate title relating to the candidate's area of research
  - ii. the full name of the candidate
  - iii. one of the following statements:  
Published works submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the University of Bolton for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy on the basis of published work OR  
Portfolio of evidence submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the University of Bolton for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy on the basis of practice
  - iv. the month and year of submission.
- 2 A contents page listing all of the published works or the items of evidence included in the portfolio on which the application is based.
- 3 An abstract of approximately 300 words.

- 4 A high quality reprint or photocopy (at least A5 and preferably A4 size) of all the publications or items of evidence cited in the application for registration, if necessary giving proof of authenticity. The items shall be numbered and correspond exactly with the list cited in the application for registration. For the PhD by publication, unpublished works in support of the application may be appended, although normally only published work will be admissible for submission.
- 5 A rigorous critical appraisal, normally between 10,000 and 15,000<sup>1</sup> words, comprising:
  - i. details of specific dates and locations in relation to the conduct of the research on which the submission is based;
  - ii. an analysis of the general and specific aims of the research programme, including an analysis of its component parts and a synthesis of the works as a coherent study;
  - iii. a discussion of the contribution made by the submitted works or evidenced by the items within the portfolio to the general advancement of the field of study and research area or professional or creative practice, which demonstrates a common theme;
  - iv. a demonstration that the work or the practice constitutes an independent and original contribution to knowledge in the chosen field;
  - v. a review of the current literature, unless already incorporated within any of the other items submitted.
- 6 A signed declaration confirming whether or not any of the works or the practice on which the application is based has formed part of any submission for any other degree awarded to the candidate.
- 7 Where any work has been published or carried out in collaboration with other persons, a statement signed by the candidate and co-authors or collaborators specifying the extent of the relative contributions of each to the work.

The published works or portfolio of evidence and accompanying documentation shall be presented in a box file of sufficient rigidity to support the weight of the enclosed material when standing upright. Once all revisions to the submission and report have been completed satisfactorily after the examination, the submission must be permanently bound in its final form according to the format detailed in the **Research Degree Regulations** and three copies lodged with the University.

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<sup>1</sup> Where it is felt to be appropriate to the subject matter or nature of the submission, the Board of Studies for Research Degrees may grant permission for the critical commentary to be longer than this.



## 8. Appointment of Examiners

Three months prior to submission, the Board of Studies for Research Degrees shall appoint at least two and normally not more than three examiners of whom at least one shall be an external. An external examiner shall be independent of the University, any collaborating establishment or other organisation associated with the candidate's work, shall not be a co-author of any of the candidate's cited works or collaborator in his/her practice and shall not normally be a supervisor of another candidate at the University. Former members of staff of the University or any collaborating establishment shall not normally be approved as external examiners until three years after the termination of their employment with that institution. The procedures and requirements regarding examination arrangements, the student's responsibilities and the selection of examiners defined in the **Research Degree Regulations** shall apply.

## 9. Examination

The examination for the degree of PhD by published work or for the PhD by practice shall have two stages:

- i. the submission and assessment of the published works or portfolio of evidence and accompanying critical appraisal leading to a preliminary report and recommendation by each examiner;
- ii. defence of the submission by oral examination.

The examination shall be conducted wholly in accordance with the University's **Research Degree Regulations**.

## 10. Assessment

- 1 In examining the candidate, the examiners must determine whether:
  - i. the works or evidence of practice submitted demonstrate that the candidate has undertaken a programme of study and research commensurate with the requirements for the preparation of a PhD thesis in the chosen field;
  - ii. the submission demonstrates that the candidate has personally made a systematic and coherent study within a single or closely related field(s);
  - iii. the candidate has demonstrated an appropriate level of critical analysis and reflection on the research previously undertaken;
  - iv. the candidate has demonstrated an understanding of research methods appropriate to the chosen field;

- v. the candidate has shown originality by the exercise of independent critical powers and has made a distinctive contribution to knowledge.
- 2 Following the completion of the first examination, the examiners may recommend to the Board of Studies for Research Degrees, in accordance with paragraph 10.3 of the Research Degree Regulations, that:
- i. the student be awarded the degree;
  - ii. the student be awarded the degree subject to minor amendments being made to the critical appraisal;
  - iii. the student be permitted to re-submit for the degree and be re-examined, with or without an oral examination;
  - iv. the student be not awarded the degree and be not permitted to be re-examined;
  - v. the student be awarded the degree of MPhil subject to the presentation of the critical appraisal amended to the satisfaction of the examiners (NB. Examiners are urged to consider carefully the implications of this recommendation).

## **11. Award of the Degree of PhD**

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

## **12. General**

All other matters shall be regulated, as necessary, by the University's **Research Degree Regulations**, including the Notes on Programmes of Study leading to Research Degrees and other supplementary regulations, procedures and notes of guidance.

## **Annex - Guidelines on Portfolios of Evidence for the PhD by Practice**

It is expected that a candidate for this award, whilst not submitting a conventional written thesis, will nonetheless be able to demonstrate by engagement in the high level and innovatory professional or creative practice evidenced in the submitted portfolio, the competences which, according to the QAA, are associated with all doctoral level awards:

### ***Doctoral degrees are awarded to students who have demonstrated:***

- *the creation and interpretation of new knowledge, through original research or other advanced scholarship, of a quality to satisfy peer review, extend the forefront of the discipline, and merit publication*
- *a systematic acquisition and understanding of a substantial body of knowledge which is at the forefront of an academic discipline or area of professional practice*
- *the general ability to conceptualise, design and implement a project for the generation of new knowledge, applications or understanding at the forefront of the discipline, and to adjust the project design in the light of unforeseen problems*
- *a detailed understanding of applicable techniques for research and advanced academic enquiry.*

### ***Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:***

- *make informed judgements on complex issues in specialist fields, often in the absence of complete data, and be able to communicate their ideas and conclusions clearly and effectively to specialist and non-specialist audiences*
- *continue to undertake pure and/or applied research and development at an advanced level, contributing substantially to the development of new techniques, ideas or approaches.*

### ***And holders will have:***

- *the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and largely autonomous initiative in complex and unpredictable situations, in professional or equivalent environments.*

(The QAA, *The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland*, August 2008, QAA 264 08/08.)

In the case of professional or creative practice the practice in itself, however successful or highly regarded by others, is not evidence that it is the result of ongoing engagement in research and advanced academic enquiry nor does it demonstrate how that research contributes to the advancement of knowledge within

that practice. It follows, therefore, that, in choosing items of evidence for inclusion within the submitted portfolio, candidates should be seeking to show not only that the practice has taken place and what its nature and significance is, but also how it is the result of engagement with established practice within the field and how it develops, challenges or significantly revises that practice.

In most cases, though not necessarily in all, a significant item of evidence may well be some kind of reflective diary, log or commonplace book which records the progress of the research project. Where appropriate, audio or video recordings may supplement or replace the diary, especially where this serves to validate the authenticity of the research process. Where performance forms a significant part of the practice in question, such recordings will be highly desirable if not essential.

Other evidence might include:

- research papers,
- reports,
- case studies with commentaries,
- business plans,
- schemes of work,
- diagnostic tools and instruments,
- (records of) performances or artifacts (photographs, catalogues, audio or video recordings etc.)
- action plans,
- corporate strategies,
- curriculum designs and schemes of work,
- patents, registered designs or software
- portfolios of creative text based work (poetry, short stories, etc.).

This list is meant to be suggestive rather than exhaustive, and in considering the nature of the evidence to be included, the extent to which it might clearly demonstrate one or more of the competencies listed above is obviously important. A statement of the kind of evidence it is intended the portfolio will include should form part of the R1 (Prac) so that its appropriateness can be assessed by the Board of Studies for Research Degrees as part of the registration procedure.