Framework for Online Professional Doctorates

Annexe 2

Guidelines on Submission of a Research Degree Thesis for Examination for Online Professional Doctorates

Applicable to all students with effect from academic year 2016-17
General Information

1. These Procedures must be read in conjunction with the University of Liverpool’s (UoL) ‘Policy on Submission of a Research Degree Thesis for Examination’ (Appendix 7 to the PGR Code of Practice) see: https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/aqsd/academic-codes-of-practice/pgr-code-of-practice/

2. The following Procedures document the limited number of instances where specific differences in application of the Policy apply solely for online professional doctorate (OPD) students. These Procedures are set out in accordance with the Section numbering of the Policy (Appendix 7).

It should also be noted that:

3. These Procedures cover the thesis stage only of professional doctorate programmes delivered online through the University’s partnership with Laureate Online Education (hereafter referred to as ‘Laureate’). During the pre-thesis stage the OPD is subject to the provisions of UoL’s Code of Practice on Assessment- see https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/aqsd/academic-codes-of-practice/code-of-practice-on-assessment/

4. Other than the normal communications between supervisors and a student through Laureate Lens, communications with the student must be sent to theironline.liverpool.ac.uk email address recorded on the student record system at Laureate.

5. At the appropriate stage, when set as a requirement of the Policy, communications with the student will be made by the UoL SDPR/IDPR¹.

¹ Or nominee as appropriate
1. Introduction

In addition to the documents listed in the Introduction to the Policy, online students should refer to the Online Professional Doctorate Framework and Laureate’s Student Information and Support webpages at http://www.support.liverpool-online.com/. In cases of complaint they should also refer to Laureate’s Student Complaints Policy and submit a complaint to Laureate in the first instance.

2. General Principles

2.2 The normal minimum period permitted for submission of an Online Professional Doctorate thesis shall be as stipulated in the Framework for Online Professional Doctorates. It is recommended that all students, including re-submission candidates, submit their thesis for examination at least 9 months prior to the end of their maximum period permitted for registration for an Online Professional Doctorate.

2.3 The normal minimum and maximum periods permitted for registration for an Online Professional Doctorate shall be as stipulated in the relevant Framework for Online Professional Doctorates in place. If, in exceptional circumstances, an extension to the maximum period of registration is required, the School must make a case to the Associate Pro Vice Chancellor for PGR, through the Faculty Student Experience Manager, for exceptional approval of this, notwithstanding the relevant Ordinance, Regulations, Code of Practice or Policies.

3 Preparation of the thesis prior to submission

3.2 Whilst all candidates should also consult their Supervisors prior to preparation and submission of their thesis, the following key requirements should be observed:

a) **Word count:** The maximum word count for the thesis is specified in the Framework for Online Professional Doctorates and should not normally be exceeded. If, in exceptional circumstances, the candidate wishes to exceed the relevant maximum word count, they should contact their Primary Supervisor, who will make application for approval by the relevant School/Institute Director of PGR or their designated representative. If such approval is given it shall be communicated to the Examiners by the relevant UoL administrator.

   Criteria for approval of an application to exceed the word count include:
   
   - Extensive primary material
   - Translation of primary material
   - Extensive data.

   The maximum word count includes footnotes and appendices but not the bibliography.

b) **Published Papers:** OPD students would not normally submit a thesis as series of papers, but they might submit a thesis as a series of studies. Where the candidate submits a thesis as a series of studies embodying the results of their research, the following should be observed:

   - The studies must be integrated into the thesis in a coherent and structured manner, with formatting in accordance with Annexe 1.
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Applicable to all students, with effect from 2016/17

- There must be a conventional 'Introduction' chapter that carefully explains and justifies the background and rationale for the approach taken.
- Each study should be called a chapter and have an introductory section that explains how it links to preceding and following chapters.
- The thesis must contain a ‘Conclusion’ chapter that integrates the different strands presented in the results chapters.

h) Electronic version of the thesis (Online Professional Doctorate students only): The copy of the thesis submitted for examination must be in Portable Document Format (pdf); further detailed guidance is provided in Annexe 1 to Appendix 7 of the PGR Code of Practice.

4 Submission of the thesis to Laureate

Candidates must submit a single electronic copy of their thesis via the relevant Turnitin submission link in the thesis classroom for the supervisor and student provided through the programme’s Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) that is maintained by Laureate. The student must also email a copy of the thesis to the relevant UoL administrator and notify his or her primary supervisor that the thesis has been submitted.

7. Confidentiality of material

7.1 Where a candidate or their sponsor considers that elements of the thesis are particularly confidential, the candidate should inform the Director of Studies for the programme prior to submission of the thesis, in order for the Examiners to be informed of the particularly sensitive nature of the material.

8. Requirements for minor modifications or full re-submission following first examination of the submitted thesis

8.1 For Online Professional Doctorate Degrees the possible outcomes of the examination(s) are defined in the relevant Framework for Online Professional Doctorates.

8.3 Laureate will monitor deadlines for re-submission or minor modifications and notify the appropriate UoL Administrator of re-submission deadlines. Submission of minor modifications or re-submission of the thesis must be made in the same way as the original thesis, using the appropriate re-submission link i.e via Turnitin via Laureate’s virtual learning environment.

9. Submission of the successfully examined thesis to the Library Repository

9.2 Candidates must deposit their thesis with the UoL Library within four weeks of the date of the communication from the PGR Student Administration Team notifying them of their success in their examination. This communication will be sent to the candidate’s University and Laureate email accounts only. Candidates should note that they will not be permitted to graduate until they have deposited their thesis with the Library.

12. Sources of further information

In addition to the sources of information listed in Appendix 7 of the Code of Practice for Postgraduate Research Degrees, OPD students should also refer to the following:
Information about online programmes:
- EdD: http://success.liverpool-online.com/edd/thesis
- DBA: http://success.liverpool-online.com/dba/thesis
Guidelines for formatting and presentation of an Online Professional Doctorate degree thesis in electronic format only to UoL for examination

This Annexe provides additional guidance to candidates and should be read in conjunction with the Policy on Submission of a Research Degree Thesis for Examination.

1. **Electronic version of the thesis (for Online Professional Doctorates only)**
The copy of the thesis submitted for examination must be in Portable Document Format (pdf). Candidates must submit a single electronic copy of their thesis via the relevant Turnitin submission link in the thesis classroom for the supervisor and student provided through the programme’s Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) that is maintained by Laureate.

8. **Paper**
This section does not apply to students registered for an Online Professional Doctorate.

8a. **Page Layout**
The layout of the page should normally be A4 format.

9. **Margins and line spacing**
1½ line spacing is advised, but at least double line spacing should be used for text that contains many subscripts and superscripts. Quotations may be indented. Candidates should check the text carefully and it is strongly advised to make full use of error-checking facilities. Margins must be 25mm minimum.

10. **Binding**
This section does not apply to students registered for an Online Professional Doctorate.

11. **Supporting material**
Diagrams, maps and illustrations should be placed as near to the relevant text as possible. All such supporting material should normally be included within the same electronic file as the main body of the thesis, rather than provided as a separate file. Images must be of good quality and adequate size. The Director of Studies for the programme should be consulted as to the appropriate means of submission in any cases where the thesis includes material that cannot easily be included within the submitted electronic file (e.g. video recordings, audio recordings, large charts).

12. **Original Creative Material**
This section does not apply to students registered for an Online Professional Doctorate.