Postgraduate Research Code of Practice

APPENDIX 7

Policy on Submission of a Research Degree Thesis for Examination

1. Introduction

1.1 This Policy forms part of the University's Postgraduate Research (PGR) Code of Practice. In addition to the PGR Code of Practice and its other Appendices, other University of Liverpool (UoL) policies, procedures and documents which may be relevant to this Policy are as follows:
- Ordinances governing Postgraduate Research degrees listed in 1.2 below
- PGR Handbook
- Student Complaints Procedure

1.2 This Policy covers the following research programmes:
- Doctor in Philosophy (PhD)
- Master of Philosophy (MPhil)
- Doctor of Medicine (MD)
- Campus-based Professional Doctorates (the research element)

1.3 Online Professional Doctorate programmes are governed by the appropriate Online Professional Doctorate Framework (Appendices 12a and 12b of the PGR Code of Practice).

1.4 Joint or dual awards are governed by the individual award agreement.

1.5 The value of a UoL research degree award is underpinned by the quality of the research experience provided to candidates studying on the respective degree programme. UoL is responsible for the academic quality and standards of all study within its research degree programmes, including those offered under a collaborative agreement with an institutional partner.

2. General Principles

2.1 This Policy covers the preparation and submission of a research degree thesis for the purpose of examination and assessment only. The specific requirements governing a candidate's depositing of a successfully examined thesis to the UoL Library Repository are covered by a separate guidance document provided by the UoL Library.

2.2 The normal minimum and maximum periods permitted for *submission* of a research degree thesis shall be as stipulated in the relevant research degree Ordinance in place at the time of a candidate's first registration for the degree. Candidates should be made aware by their Primary Supervisor that if, exceptionally, they are permitted to submit their thesis early they will still be required by UoL to pay fees for the normal minimum period of registration.

2.3 The normal minimum and maximum periods permitted for *registration* for a research degree shall be as stipulated in the relevant research degree Ordinance in place at the time of a candidate's first registration for the degree. If, in exceptional circumstances, an extension to the maximum period of registration is required, the School must make a case to the Postgraduate Research Experience Team (PRET), through the Faculty Head of Education and Student Experience, for approval of this, notwithstanding the relevant Ordinance, Regulations, Code of Practice or Policies.

2.4 The student will be examined on the material that has been submitted and the context within which the research is conducted. The student may **not** submit further material after initial submission of the thesis.

3. Preparation of the thesis prior to submission

3.1 More detailed guidelines on UoL's requirements regarding the format and style of a candidate's thesis submission are attached as Annexe 1. Further advice and guidance regarding good practice for presentation of the thesis can also be obtained from the Postgraduate Research Experience Team (PRET).

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 relevant Ordinance or Framework governing the research degree 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. Approval will only be given in exceptional circumstances and if such approval is given it shall be communicated to the Examiners by the Research Degree Administration Team (Student Life).

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) Formatting: See Annexe 1.

c) References: References to published work should be given and all sources appropriately acknowledged. See Annexe 1.

d) Abstract: Each copy of the thesis must contain an Abstract. See Annexe 1.

e) Published Papers: See Annexe 2.

Candidates wishing to include materials that are intended for publication, but that are not yet published must do so in line with the presentation guidelines set out in this Policy and Annexe 1 to Appendix 7 of the PGR Code of Practice (Guidelines for Formatting and Presentation of a PGR Thesis to UoL for Examination).

f) Language of thesis: The thesis must be written in English, except for quoted material, which may be in the original language.

g) Academic Integrity: There are conventions of academic practice, such as established referencing and citation protocols, which both display and ensure academic integrity. Failure to adhere to these conventions can result in poor academic practice or, if there is a clear intention to deceive examiners, in unfair and/or dishonest academic practice. The PGR Academic Integrity Policy (Appendix 4 of the PGR Code of Practice) and the Policy on Misconduct in Research sets out the University's approach to promoting academic integrity and the courses of action which will be pursued when academic misconduct is suspected. Acts that would be subject to UoL's Disciplinary or Fitness to Practise procedures will be dealt with under those procedures.

4. Submission of the thesis to the Research Degree Administration Team (Student Life)

Candidates must submit an electronic copy of their thesis to the Research Degree Administration Team (Student Life) for examination. The copy of the thesis must be submitted

in Portable Document Format (pdf). In the case of joint or dual degree programmes candidates must submit their thesis in accordance with the relevant institutional partnership agreement. The thesis submission form can be found here. Where a student has not submitted by their submission deadline or made contact with the Research Degree Administration Team (Student Life), they will be Deemed Withdrawn for non-engagement in accordance with UoL's PGR Progress Policy and Procedures (Appendix 3, Section 4.4 (a) (i) of the PGR CoP).

5. Copyright

5.1 The copyright in a PGR thesis will belong to the candidate, unless ownership of copyright is transferred. However, the candidate's thesis may be embargoed where it is required by third-party funding terms or in cases where UoL is pursuing evaluation, exploitation or protection of intellectual property.

5.2 In accordance with normal academic custom, the results of the PGR project may be publishable by UoL and the supervisor(s). The candidate engaged in the project shall be permitted to present and to publish the methods and results of the project, provided that UoL shall have advance notice of any disclosure and will enjoy discretion to delay proposed publication or presentation if, in its reasonable opinion, such delay is necessary to secure protection of intellectual property rights.

5.3 A candidate registered under an agreement with a partner for joint supervision of a PGR project is subject to UK copyright law and those laws pertaining to the Partner Institution. Further guidance is provided in the link in section 12 below.

6. Intellectual Property

6.1 The candidate will be subject to UoL's Intellectual Property Policy, which reserves ownership of new intellectual property arising from the candidate's research to UoL.

6.2 Intellectual property ownership and exploitation rights arising from jointly supervised postgraduate research will be agreed on a case by case basis and will be informed by the inventive contribution of each institution's supervisor and the candidate.

6.3 UoL's right of ownership may be subordinated by third-party agreements with funders or collaborators and as such the intellectual property ownership and exploitation position will vary on a case by case basis.

6.4 When possible, joint supervision agreements will include provision for the ownership, protection and exploitation rights to intellectual property developed in the course of a PGR project.

6.5 In the event that a PGR project is not subject to funder or collaboration agreement terms which impede intellectual property ownership, the default position will be that UoL will own the arising intellectual property and will, where appropriate, secure a licence to access any intellectual property owned by the Partner Institution on fair and reasonable terms.

7. Confidentiality of material

7.1 The Examiners will treat the thesis as privileged and confidential information. The full thesis must be submitted to the examiners for examination. Where a candidate or their sponsor considers that elements of the thesis are particularly confidential, the candidate should inform the Research Degree Administration Team (Student Life) prior to submission of the thesis, in order for the Examiners to be informed of the particularly sensitive nature of the material.

7.2 Following a successful defence at the *viva* examination, where a candidate or their sponsor considers that elements of the thesis are confidential they may request restricted access by third parties to the thesis deposited in the UoL Library (see section 9.1 below).

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

8.1 For PhD, MPhil, MD and campus-based Professional Doctorate degrees the possible outcomes of the examination(s) are defined in the relevant Ordinances and Frameworks governing these degrees.

8.2 Details of required modifications or requirements for full re-submission will be provided to the student by the Examiners, in accordance with the [Policy on Research Degree Examinations and Examiners](#) (Appendix 8 of the PGR Code of Practice).

8.3 The Research Degree Administration Team (Student Life) will monitor deadlines for re-submission and notify the appropriate School/Institute PGR professional services staff of missed re-submission deadlines. The Research Degree Administration Team (Student Life) will be responsible for handling students' non-compliance with the academic requirement to comply with re-submission deadlines whilst modifications deadlines will be managed by the School/ Institute, in accordance with the procedures outlined in the [Policy and Procedures on the Academic Progress of Postgraduate Research Students](#) (Appendix 3 of the PGR Code of Practice).

8.4 *Minor and major modifications*

a) Normally candidates are expected to submit their minor modifications to the designated Examiner to the satisfaction of the Examiner within a period of three months from the date of the formal notification of the outcome of their *viva* by the Research Degree Administration Team (Student Life). It is recommended that candidates submitting their modified thesis should be as explicit as possible in setting out how the revisions address all of the Examiners' comments.

b) Normally candidates are expected to submit their major modifications to the designated Examiner to the satisfaction of all Examiners within a period of six months from the date of the formal notification of the outcome of their *viva* by the Research Degree Administration Team (Student Life). It is recommended that candidates submitting their modified thesis should be as explicit as possible in setting out how the revisions address all of the Examiners' comments.

c) If a student requires a short extension to their modifications submission period they may request an extension through their School/Institute or Faculty DPR. If any further period of extension is required in addition, the request must be referred to the Research Degree Administration Team (Student Life). Extensions to the modifications submission period must not result in the student exceeding their maximum period of registration.

8.5 *Re-submission of thesis*

a) Normally candidates are expected to provide any re-submission to the Research Degree Administration Team (Student Life) within a period of one calendar year from the date of the formal notification of the outcome of their *viva* by the Research Degree Administration Team (Student Life). A candidate re-submitting their thesis is subject to the normal PGR progress procedures.

b) If a student requires an extension or interruption to the one calendar year period they may request it through their School/Institute or Faculty DPR, via TULIP.

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

9.1   Guidance on depositing a successfully examined thesis to the UoL Library Repository is covered by a separate document provided by the UoL Library (see section 2.1 above). It should be noted that:

- Candidates registered prior to 1st August 2008 must submit two hard-bound copies of their thesis to the library. They may also submit an electronic version.

- Candidates registered after 1st August 2008 must submit an electronic copy only of their thesis to the e-thesis repository.

Where a candidate or their sponsor considers that elements of the thesis are confidential they may request restricted access to the thesis in accordance with the Library's guidance document.

9.2   Candidates must deposit their thesis with the UoL Library within <u>four weeks</u> of the date of the communication from the Research Degree Administration Team (Student Life) notifying them of their success in their examination. This communication will be sent to the candidate's University email account only. Candidates should note that they will not be permitted to graduate until they have deposited their thesis with the Library.

10. Responsibilities of the Supervisors

The responsibilities of the Supervisors are outlined in detail in the Policy on Research Student Supervision (Appendix 2 of the PGR Code of Practice).

11. Responsibilities of the candidate

Additional responsibilities of the candidate relating to the formatting and presentation of their thesis are provided in further detail in Annexe 1.

12. Sources of further information

- The PGR Code of Practice

- Research Degree Administration Team (Student Life)

- The Leadership, Organisational, Professional & Academic Development Academy

- University Library information regarding copyright

- Information regarding submission to the University Library

- Student Complaints Policy and Procedures

- Liverpool Guild of Students Advice Service