

ACADEMIC COUNCIL REGULATION 4

The following Regulation applies to students who entered the PhD Degree programme prior to September 2006.

*(as approved by the Academic Council, December 1999)
(Revisions approved by Academic Council, April 2009)*

The degree of Doctor of Philosophy

1. The degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) may be awarded on the basis of research carried out by the candidate, under the supervision of a Professor or Lecturer, the results of which are submitted to the university in a thesis.

2. **Entry Requirements and Application Procedures**

2.1 To be eligible to register for the degree of PhD in University College Dublin, a candidate must have obtained a high honours standard at the examination for a primary degree of the National University of Ireland or another university, or must present such other evidence of academic standing as will satisfy the nominator and the Head of School.

2.2 An application to enter on a course of study and research leading to the degree of PhD shall be considered by the relevant College Graduate School Board, on the nominations supported by the Head of School. The title of the thesis, or a short description of the proposed research, must be provided.

2.3 If approved by the College Graduate School Board, the application shall be submitted to the Academic Council for approval. If approved by the Academic Council, the applicant must register as a PhD student, normally for a minimum of nine terms. In exceptional circumstances, the Academic Council may, on the recommendation of the College Graduate School Board, permit registration for a minimum of six terms.

3. **Supervision of Research and Preparation of the Thesis**

3.1 The Academic Council, on the recommendation of the nominator and the approval of the Graduate School Board, will assign a full-time, permanent member of staff to supervise the candidate's research; the nominator may also act as the supervisor. The Academic Council may approve joint supervision of the research; in such case, at least one of the supervisors must be a full-time, permanent member of the staff of the university.

3.2 Where the supervisor retires or resigns from the full-time staff of the university, or for any other reason is unable to continue to supervise the research, the nominator shall inform the Academic Council and, on the recommendation of the College Graduate School Board, the Academic Council shall assign another member of staff to supervise the research. Where the nominator ceases to hold office, the Graduate School Director shall inform the Academic Council and, on the recommendation of the College Graduate School Board, the Academic Council shall appoint a suitable member of the academic staff to act as nominator.

3.3 The candidate shall pursue research and shall follow such programme of study as may, with the approval of the College Graduate School Board and the Academic Council, be prescribed by the nominator or supervisor(s).

3.4 Before commencing the programme of study and research, a candidate for the PhD must register as a student of the university. A candidate may not complete registration until the Academic Council has been informed of all relevant details concerning the nominator, the supervisor(s) and the title of the proposed thesis, or a short description of the research.

3.5 The research for the PhD degree shall be carried out in the relevant School, unless the Academic Council has given permission for some, or all, of the research to be carried out elsewhere under the general supervision of the supervisor(s). Where the research is interdisciplinary, and more than one School is involved, all Schools concerned shall co-operate to provide the resources required by the candidate. In all cases, the nominator shall ensure that such resources are made available to the candidate.

3.6 The candidate's research must be carried out, and the thesis prepared, under the direction of the supervisor(s). The supervisor(s) shall regularly monitor the progress of the research. Where the supervisor(s) form the view that the candidate is unlikely to complete the research or the thesis, the candidate and the nominator should be so informed, in writing. If the nominator, having interviewed the candidate, is also of the view that the candidate is unlikely to complete the research, the College Graduate School Board and Academic Council should be so informed. The Academic Council, having considered reports from the supervisor, the nominator and the College Graduate School Board, may decide to withdraw approval for the student's continued registration as a candidate for the PhD degree.

3.7 Candidates are allowed six years in which to complete the degree from the date of first registration. If they do not complete the requirements for the PhD within six years, candidates must reapply to the College Graduate School Board, presenting justification, for permission to extend their registration. The Academic Council may extend a candidate's registration on the recommendation of the College Graduate School Board.

4. Submission of the Thesis for Examination

4.1 Upon completion of the research, the candidate should prepare a thesis, with the advice of the supervisor(s) and in accordance with the guidelines published by Assessment, UCD Registry, and should submit the thesis for examination. The candidate must be a registered student at the time when the thesis is submitted for examination.

4.2 Three copies of the thesis, bound in accordance with the guidelines published by the Assessment, UCD Registry, each accompanied by a document containing a summary of the contents of the thesis not exceeding 300 words, should be submitted, with the examination fee, to the Assessment, UCD Registry, University College Dublin.

4.3 The thesis will not be accepted by the Supervisor of Examinations, unless it is accompanied by a statement (on the appropriate form) from the supervisor(s) that the research has been carried out, and the final draft of the thesis, as submitted, has been prepared for examining under their supervision. Where such a statement is, in the opinion of the candidate, unreasonably withheld, the candidate may appeal to the Academic Council Committee on Examinations.

4.4 Research work on the basis of which a degree of the National University of Ireland, or any other university, has already been obtained will not be accepted as the main work for a PhD degree. A confirmatory statement to this effect, signed by the candidate, must be submitted with the thesis.

4.5 A PhD thesis may be submitted to the Assessment, UCD Registry at any time during an academic session for which the candidate is registered.

5. Examination of the Thesis

5.1 The Examination Board shall consist of an extern examiner and two intern examiners: (i) the nominator or the nominator's nominee and (ii) the supervisor or another full-time, permanent member of the academic staff.

5.2 Where the nominator is also the supervisor, the nominator shall nominate another intern examiner who must be a full-time, permanent member of the academic staff.

5.3 Where the candidate for the PhD is a full-time member of the academic staff of the university, or another constituent university or Recognised College of the National University of Ireland, one of the intern examiners shall be replaced by a second extern examiner.

5.4 The intern examiners shall be appointed by the Academic Council, on the recommendation of the College Graduate School Board. The extern examiner(s) shall be nominated by the Academic Council on the recommendation of the College Graduate School Board and shall be appointed by the National University of Ireland.

5.5 The Supervisor of Examinations shall forward a copy of the thesis, together with the summary of contents, to each member of the Examination Board.

5.6 The members of the Examination Board, having examined the thesis, and before making their report to the Academic Council, shall consult with one another, and, unless they recommend otherwise, they should conduct an oral examination of the candidate.

5.7 Where the examiners are in agreement, they shall submit a joint report to the Academic Council indicating their opinion on the quality of the thesis and of the research on which it is based, and recommending whether the degree should, or should not, be awarded. The examiners should also indicate whether, in their opinion, the thesis, in whole or in part, is worthy of publication. Award of the PhD should not be recommended by the examiners unless they consider that the thesis, in whole or in part, is worthy of publication as a work of serious scholarship. The report may also indicate whether, in the opinion of the examiners, major or minor corrections to the thesis are required, and shall assign responsibility to one of the intern examiners to ensure that such corrections have been made to the thesis before award of the PhD is approved by the Academic Council.

5.8 Where the examiners unanimously recommend award of the degree, the Academic Council, following consideration of their report, may approve the award of the degree.

5.9 Where the Examination Board, or an individual examiner, recommends that the degree of PhD be not awarded, the report should indicate areas of weakness and may include advice to the candidate on ways in which the thesis, or the research on which it is based, could be improved to a standard which might merit the award of the degree.

5.10 Where the Examination Board, or an individual examiner, recommends that the degree of PhD be not awarded, the report(s) should, in the first instance, be considered by the Academic Council Committee on Examinations.

5.11 Where two examiners recommend that the degree be awarded, the Standing Committee shall consider the reports of the examiners and shall submit a recommendation to the Academic Council on the award of the degree. The Academic Council, having considered the reports of the examiners and the recommendation of the Academic Council Committee on Examinations, may approve the award of the degree. Where an extern examiner has recommended that the degree be not awarded, a decision by the Academic Council to award the degree shall require the consent of two thirds of those present and voting.

5.12 Where all, or a majority, of the examiners recommend that the degree be not awarded, the Academic Council Committee on Examinations should not report to the Academic Council and should inform the candidate that the Examination Board has not recommended award of the degree.

5.13 Where the Examination Board has not recommended the award of the PhD, the candidate may request the Supervisor of Examinations to bring the examiners' report(s) to the Academic Council for consideration and for a decision on whether the degree should be awarded.

5.14 A candidate may appeal a decision of the Academic Council on the award of a PhD to the Assessment Appeals Committee.

5.15 Where the Examination Board has not recommended the award of the PhD, the candidate may submit a revised thesis. Submission of a revised thesis requires a statement from the supervisor(s) that the thesis has been revised under their supervision and that any weaknesses identified by the examiners have been addressed.

5.16 A copy of each thesis on the basis of which the degree of PhD has been awarded shall be deposited in the library of University College Dublin. At the time of submission of the thesis, candidates will be required to indicate, on a form of consent provided for that purpose, whether they agree that the deposited copy should be available immediately under conditions laid down by the university, or whether such consultation should be prohibited for a period to be determined by the university.

5.17 All theses remain the property of University College Dublin.