

SECTION II

REGULATIONS FOR HIGHER DEGREES BY RESEARCH ONLY

DEGREES BY RESEARCH AND THESIS

1 Graduates of the University of Dublin, or of any other university approved by the [University Council](#), and persons holding qualifications from other institutions which are, in the opinion of the University Council, for this purpose equivalent to a university degree, may apply for registration as graduate students reading for a higher degree by research only (Ph.D., M.Litt. and M.Sc. (Ind.)).

2 Research students are required to comply with requirements to attend generic and discipline-specific programmes as specified in local handbooks, which should be made available to each student on entry, subject to those requirements not being in conflict with general Calendar Part III regulations.

ADMISSION TO THE RESEARCH REGISTER

3 Candidates are normally required to possess a good Honours Bachelor degree (i.e., an upper-second class (2.1) or first class Honours Bachelor degree), or equivalent qualification (i.e., a grade point average of at least 3.2). However, possession of such a qualification does not guarantee acceptance.

4 The University Council approved on 7 May 2008 that from the academic year 2008/09 new research entrants with appropriate academic qualifications are normally admitted directly to year one on the Ph.D. register by the Dean of Graduate Studies on the recommendation of the applicant's prospective supervisor supported by the relevant Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate).

5 Prospective supervisors may recommend on academic grounds that their new research entrants should be admitted to the Masters register on year one in the first instance, with a view to undergoing a transfer process to the Ph.D. register normally completed by 22 months for full-time students (or 34 months for part-time students). Research applicants may also choose to apply to be accepted to the Masters' register with a view to submitting a Masters' thesis.

6 Applicants with a lower-second class (2.2) Honours Bachelor degree (or less) or a grade point average of less than 3.2 will be accepted only in special circumstances and at the discretion of the Dean of Graduate Studies. Such applicants must produce satisfactory evidence that they have the ability to carry out research effectively, and they will normally be accepted initially on probation only (see [Section II Paragraph 7](#)). They may be required to enter as one-year graduate students not registered for a higher degree (see this Section Paragraph 7 (b)).

PROBATION BEFORE ADMISSION TO THE RESEARCH REGISTER

7 Applicants may be required to do either of the following before admission to the register:

(a) spend a probationary period working upon research in the discipline for which he/she has applied. If the candidate's work is satisfactory, the candidate's registration will be confirmed and deemed to date from the beginning of the probationary period. The fees for this period will be those required of a student registered for a higher degree, or

(b) enter the University as a one-year graduate student not registered for a higher degree to read specific parts of an Honours undergraduate programme in the subject and to satisfy the [Director of Teaching and Learning](#) (Postgraduate) at a qualifying examination. On successful completion of this one-year programme he/she may proceed to the postgraduate register. The fees payable are set out on the [Academic Registry](#) web pages.

SUBJECT OF RESEARCH

8 Applicants are required upon registration to state the subject of their research; the subject proposed must be approved by the Postgraduate) to which it pertains, who must also be satisfied that the applicants are qualified to undertake the research stated to the standard required for the registered degree.

9 Research students conducting a project involving collaboration between academia and an enterprise will address an aspect of research that emerges from and contributes to the research questions of the relevant enterprise. A suitably qualified co-supervisor from the enterprise must be identified at time of application and will be nominated by the relevant Head of School for adjunct status in Trinity for the duration of the student's registration. The co-supervisor will not normally be remunerated. For such research projects the student is permitted to conduct some of the research within the enterprise's premises. All matters concerning intellectual property must be agreed in advance between TRINITY and the enterprise.

ROLE OF DIRECTOR OF TEACHING AND LEARNING (POSTGRADUATE)

10 It is the responsibility of Directors of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) to ensure that the research chosen may be effectively undertaken in their School, and that sufficient resources and a suitable Supervisor can be provided for the period of study. They may decline to accept a student if they are not satisfied that these conditions can be met. It is also their responsibility to ensure that no members of staff of their School are required or allowed to take on more graduate students than they can reasonably supervise without adversely affecting the students' studies. They should also make provision for the continued supervision of graduate students whose Supervisors are no longer able to carry out their duties.

PROVISION FOR OTHER SCHOOL OFFICERS TO ACT

11 The Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) may devolve some of the functions of his or her role as detailed in this Section (Section 2) to a Head of Discipline/Department, subject to the agreement of the Head of School, and by informing the Dean of Graduate

Studies. However, the Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) still retains overall responsibility for graduate studies in the School.

12 The Head of School may act in place of the [Director of Teaching and Learning](#) (Postgraduate) in certain cases, with the agreement of the Dean of Graduate Studies.

PROBATION, PROGRESS AND CONTINUING REGISTRATION ON THE RESEARCH REGISTER

13 A student registered for a higher degree by research only is required to carry out research in an appropriate branch of learning. This research must be carried out under the direction of a Supervisor approved by the [Dean of Graduate Studies](#) on the nomination of the appropriate Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate).

14 Students are required to attend such transferable and discipline-specific modules as are laid down by the graduate programme director or the supervisor in consultation with the appropriate programme director or Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate). All students commencing their programme from 2018-19 must complete the 'Research Integrity and Impact in an Open Scholarship Era' module.

15 A Thesis Committee shall be appointed for all PhD students. The role of the Thesis committee is to (1) support the academic progress of the student and provide guidance on their development as PhD researchers; (2) assess and monitor research progress through formal review processes (i.e. annual review and confirmation/transfer processes) and agree an appropriate recommendation, and (3) support the student-supervisor relationship and enhance the overall quality and rigour of the supervision process. Committee membership should be proposed by the supervisor(s) in consultation with the student, for approval by the Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate).

A Thesis Committee comprises at least two members independent of the supervisor and co-supervisors (Supervisors and co-supervisors cannot be formal members of a Thesis Committee). One member must be an independent academic member of Trinity staff from within the School familiar with the student's research area. The second may be an additional academic member of staff from within the university or a recognised external expert in the student's field of study. Such external experts may be affiliated with external universities, but this is not a requirement for the role.

Schools or Disciplines wishing to operate models equivalent to the 'Thesis Committee' model outlined in this Calendar, must seek permission from the Dean of Graduate Studies, through the Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate).

16 The progress of graduate students will be reviewed each year, and the Supervisors and/or Directors of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) may test students in whatever way is appropriate. On an annual basis, the student and their Supervisor(s) should complete an annual review report. This form may be downloaded from the Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies website. In a time period determined by the relevant School or Discipline, and no later than the end of June for students on the September register and end of January for students on the March register, the members of the Thesis Committee should receive the completed annual review report. Thereafter, a meeting should be arranged between the student and the Thesis Committee to discuss academic progress. Following this meeting and, if appropriate, following discussions between the Supervisor(s) and the Thesis Committee, members of the Thesis Committee should sign the annual review report form and indicate whether or not they recommend continuation on the register.

17 If progress is unsatisfactory, Supervisor(s) or a Thesis Committee may recommend to the Dean of Graduate Studies that the student's registration should be terminated. Students who do not maintain adequate contact with their Supervisor(s) may be deemed unsatisfactory and their registration terminated. The first year of registration is probationary for all students. Directors of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) will exercise particular care in reviewing the progress of students after one year of research. The Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) in consultation with the Supervisor(s) and the members of the student's Thesis Committee will only recommend continuing registration as a research student if the candidate has clearly established to the staff concerned sufficient commitment and degree of promise that it seems reasonable to allow the candidate to proceed.

18 In the event of disagreement between the Supervisor(s) and a student's Thesis Committee as to whether the student's registration should be continued, the matter should be mediated, in the first instance, by the Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) and, if no resolution can be achieved, by the Dean of Graduate Studies.

19 The Head of School may act in place of the [Director of Teaching and Learning](#) (Postgraduate) in certain cases, with the agreement of the Dean of Graduate Studies.

RESEARCH SUPERVISION

ROLE OF SUPERVISORS

20 The Principal Supervisor shall provide advice and assistance to students that shall include, in particular, the college regulations and matters relating to academic progression and examination. Any reasonable written requests shall be responded to without undue delay. The Principal Supervisor shall also give the students all possible assistance regarding access to the material, equipment and other resources essential to their research. Principal Supervisors shall be accessible to the student for a personal consultation session at least once a month during the statutory term, unless a prior arrangement has been agreed between the two parties.

21 Joint supervision is permitted, if prior approval has been sought and obtained from the Dean of Graduate Studies. In all cases of joint supervision one individual shall be the Principal Supervisor and that person should be in the School in which the student is registered. The Co-Supervisor, if appointed, must be willing and qualified to assume the role of the Principal Supervisor if the latter becomes indisposed. If no Co-Supervisor has been appointed and a Principal Supervisor takes a temporary leave of absence or sabbatical of longer than 3 months' duration, a temporary Acting Supervisor must be appointed by the Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate). Adjunct and Assistant Supervisors may also be appointed to contribute additional advice and guidance of a purely academic nature, the extent and parameters of which may vary and should be negotiated with the student, the supervisor and the Thesis Committee.

ELIGIBILITY TO SUPERVISE RESEARCH STUDENTS

22 Eligibility criteria for the four different categories of supervisors is as follows:

(i) The Principal Supervisor must be a Professor, Associate Professor, Senior Lecturer, Lecturer or Senior Research Fellow, including those with Research and Clinical titles. Members of the academic staff on contract may be a Principal Supervisor, but in such cases a Co-Supervisor must also be appointed from among the permanent academic staff; A Co-Supervisor is not required for members of staff on contracts of indefinite duration or contracts which extend beyond the maximum period of the student's registration (i.e., 2 years for a Masters, 4 for a PhD).

(ii) In circumstances where the nominated principal supervisor of an incoming student is due to take a leave of absence/sabbatical during the first year of the student's registration, that supervisor should not be appointed unless the relevant Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) is satisfied that the nominated principal supervisor or an appointed co-supervisor will be in a position to provide adequate and effective supervision to the student in question during the leave of absence period. In such circumstances, it is necessary that a thesis committee be established for the relevant student prior to her or his registration.

(iii) Exceptionally, and only after consultation with the Dean of Graduate Studies, other categories of individuals may be nominated to one of these supervisory roles.

23 The Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) has authority to approve membership of a Thesis Committee and any necessary changes in that membership, ensuring that there is at least one independent academic member from within the School represented at all times. It is not necessary that all Thesis Committee members be members of the academic staff. For the avoidance of doubt, the criteria for appointment of supervisors do not necessarily apply to all members of the Thesis Committee.

COMPLAINTS CONCERNING SUPERVISION

24 Complaints about the adequacy of supervision should normally be made first to the [Director of Teaching and Learning](#) (Postgraduate). If the Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) is unable to resolve the problem, or where the Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) is the Supervisor, the student should contact the Dean of Graduate Studies. Where the [Dean of Graduate Studies](#) is also the Supervisor, the student should consult the Dean of his/her Faculty. The Faculty Dean should then follow the procedure outlined above. The Dean of Graduate Studies, or if appropriate the Faculty Dean, should first attempt to resolve the issue by consultation with the persons immediately involved. If this fails, the student may make a formal complaint in writing to the Dean of Graduate Studies. Complaints about the adequacy of supervision will not be entertained once a thesis has been presented for examination.

25 In any case where a dispute between a student and his/her Supervisor and/or Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) has been brought to the notice of the Dean of Graduate Studies, the examiners of that student may both be selected from outside the School.

ATTENDANCE

26 To qualify for the degree, students must be registered (i.e., duly placed on the higher degree register of the University).

27 Normally graduate students on the research register must attend College or one of its associated institutions full-time. This regulation is automatically relaxed in the case of graduate students who have been approved for the 'Non-Resident Ph.D. or whose research necessitates their undertaking field study.

28 In special circumstances, a graduate student may be permitted to carry out part, or even all, of his/her research in another institution (e.g., in [C.E.R.N.](#) or the [Bibliothèque Nationale](#), Paris). This will be allowed only when it is the most appropriate way of carrying out the proposed research and when the institution has facilities adequate for the purpose. It will be necessary to obtain assurances that the candidate will be able to proceed full-time with his/her research. It will also be necessary to satisfy the Dean of Graduate Studies that the candidate can attend the University for such periods as are necessary for the adequate supervision of the research, though the requirement for attendance may be reduced if there is a suitable person in the proposed institution to be appointed in an honorary capacity to supervise the work jointly with the internal College Supervisor. Permission to carry out such research in another institution must be sought from the Dean of Graduate Studies with support from the appropriate Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate).

PART-TIME REGISTRATION

29 Normally part-time registration is available only to those engaged in teaching or research within the University. However, in special circumstances part-time registration may be permitted to highly qualified graduates, who are engaged full-time in an occupation which is related to their proposed research and which gives adequate opportunity to them to pursue their research, provided that they can attend the University for such periods as are necessary for adequate supervision. Students on the full-time research register who obtain full-time employment relevant to their research after having completed the first year on the Ph.D. register may apply in writing to the Dean of Graduate Studies to transfer to the part-time register for the remainder of their registration, which may not in this case extend beyond year 5 on the part-time Ph.D. register in total. Such applications must have the written support of the supervisor endorsed by the [Director of Teaching and Learning](#) (Postgraduate). Students on the full-time research register may not transfer to the part-time register during or for the final year of their registration.

30 The minimum period of time on the part-time register is three years. If a student on the part-time register leaves before they have completed six years on the register, they will be required to pay the difference in fees between the total part-time fees they have already paid and the equivalent [full-time fees](#) that they would have been charged during that time on the register, up to a maximum of the four years full-time fee.

31 Students entering or continuing on the part-time register may not at any point transfer to the full-time register.

EXTENSIONS AND OFF-BOOKS

32 Graduate students on the research register must inform their Supervisor as soon as is practicable if they are incapacitated by illness or other grave cause and unable to undertake their agreed research programme. If, following consultation with the Supervisor, the illness is deemed to be of significant duration or severity to impede the graduate student's progress, medical certificates should be provided by the Supervisor to the Dean of Graduate Studies.

33 The maximum period before submission of a thesis for students on the full-time M.Litt. and M.Sc. (by research) registers and for those on the full-time Ph.D. register are two and four years respectively (three and six years respectively for students on the part-time register). An extension of the period within which the thesis can be presented may be obtained by application to the [Dean of Graduate Studies](#) by the student's Supervisor and must have a strong recommendation from the [Director of Teaching and Learning](#) (Postgraduate).

34 Requests for extensions must be submitted before the period on the higher degrees register has expired. In cases where a request for an extension is not made before expiry of the normal time on the higher degree register, a replacement fee will be charged, in addition to the continuation fee, if an extension is granted.

35 In special circumstances (such as prolonged illness or absence from the country for grave *ad misericordiam* reasons), a graduate student may be allowed "off-books" (off the register) for one year. Application should be made by the student's Supervisor to the Dean of Graduate Studies and must have a strong recommendation from the Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate). In exceptional circumstances this period may be extended for a second year with the agreement of the Dean of Graduate Studies.

CONFIRMATION OF THE CONTINUATION ON THE PH.D. REGISTER

36 A stringent process of academic assessment for all Ph.D. students to confirm their continuation on the Ph.D. register shall normally be completed by 22 months for full-time students (or 34 months for part-time students) (30th June for September registrants; 31st January for March registrants). The process is to be approached positively and constructively by all parties as an essential part in the student's learning experience. The confirmation process replaces the annual progress review process in the relevant year of study.

37 The Ph.D. confirmation process requires the student to prepare a Ph.D. confirmation report; the confirmation report should be written according to the guidelines issued by the appropriate [Director of Teaching and Learning](#) (Postgraduate). The student must ensure that a draft of the confirmation report is made available to the Supervisor(s) with sufficient time for the Supervisor(s) to read it and provide comments. In submitting their confirmation report, candidates are required to declare that the submission is their own original work and is compliant with relevant College policies and guidelines, including the Academic Integrity Policy, the Trinity Policy on Good Research Practice, and the guidance on AI and GenAI in Teaching, Learning, Assessment and Research. Failure to comply with these policies will be considered a breach of the confirmation regulations.

38 The student shall be invited to attend a Ph.D. confirmation interview. The Ph.D. confirmation panel for each student comprises the members of the student's Thesis Committee and should be chaired by the Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) or his or her nominee. The Supervisor(s) shall not be a member of the Ph.D. confirmation panel but may be in attendance as observers at the confirmation interview conducted by the Thesis Committee as appropriate to local and discipline norms. The Chair should ensure that time is allocated for the student to speak with the Thesis Committee without the Supervisor(s) present.

39 Written feedback shall be given to the student as soon as possible after the Ph.D. confirmation interview. The recommendation of the panel shall be one of the following: (a) continuation on the Ph.D. register, (b) continuation on the Ph.D. register after some minor changes have been made to the Ph.D. confirmation report, (c) continuation on the Ph.D. not recommended at this time: a new report to be written and confirmation interview to be held again as soon as possible thereafter, (d) a recommendation to change to the research Masters register to submit a Master's thesis, or (e) not to continue as a postgraduate research student.

40 A student may appeal the result of a Ph.D. confirmation interview.

TRANSFER TO THE PH.D. REGISTER

41 A transfer process shall be held for all students on the Masters (M.Litt. or M.Sc.) register to decide on their eligibility to be transferred to the Ph.D. register. It is to be approached positively and constructively by all parties as an essential part in the student's learning experience. The transfer process shall normally be completed by 22 months for full-time students (or 34 months for part-time students). The transfer process requires the student to prepare a transfer report; the transfer report should be written according to the guidelines issued by the appropriate [Director of Teaching and Learning](#) (Postgraduate). The student must ensure that a draft of the transfer report is made available to the Supervisor(s) with sufficient time for the Supervisor(s) to read it and provide comments. In submitting their transfer report, candidates are required to declare that the submission is their own original work and is compliant with relevant College policies and guidelines, including the Academic Integrity Policy, the Trinity Policy on Good Research Practice, and the guidance on AI and GenAI in Teaching, Learning, Assessment and Research. Failure to comply with these policies will be considered a breach of the transfer regulations.

42 The student shall be invited to attend a transfer interview. The transfer panel for each student is appointed by the Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) and shall consist of at least two members as follows: the Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) or his or her nominee, and a second member who should have acknowledged expertise in the subject area of the student's research (or in a cognate field). Members of the transfer panel may be drawn only from academic staff eligible to supervise (see Section 2, Paragraph 22). Although the Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) makes the final decision about membership of the transfer panel, he or she will consult with the Supervisor(s) before deciding and will endeavour to take into account the student's opinion. The Supervisor(s) shall not be a member of the transfer panel, but may be in attendance as observers at the transfer interview as appropriate to local and discipline norms.

43 Written feedback shall be given to the student as soon as possible after the transfer interview. The recommendation of the transfer panel shall be one of the following: (a) transfer forthwith, (b) transfer after some minor changes have been made to the transfer report, (c) transfer not recommended at this time: a new report to be written and transfer interview to be held again as soon as possible thereafter, (d) continue on the Master's register to complete a Master's thesis, or (e) not to continue as a research postgraduate student. Where a student is recommended to transfer to the PhD register, a Thesis Committee must be appointed as soon as the transfer has been completed.

44 A student may appeal the result of a transfer interview. See Section 1 paragraph 67.

PROCEDURE FOR EXAMINATION OF A CANDIDATE

45 A thesis submitted for a Master's degree must show evidence of rigour and discrimination, appreciation of the relationship of the subject to a wider field of knowledge, and make some contribution to knowledge/scholarship (but it is not necessary that it be worthy of publication); it must be clear, concise, well written and orderly and must be a candidate's own work save under the circumstances envisaged in Paragraph 85 of Section I, Part III of the Calendar.

46 A doctoral thesis must show evidence of rigour and discrimination, appreciation of the relationship of the subject to a wider field of knowledge/scholarship, and make an appreciable, original contribution to knowledge; it should show originality in the methods used and/or conclusions drawn, and must be clear, concise, well written and orderly and must be a candidate's own work save under the circumstances envisaged in Paragraph 85 of Section I, Part III of the Calendar.

47 In the submission process, candidates are required to declare that the thesis is their own original work and is compliant with relevant College policies and guidelines, including the Academic Integrity Policy, the Trinity Policy on Good Research Practice, and the guidance on AI and GenAI in Teaching, Learning, Assessment and Research. Failure to comply with these policies will be considered a breach of the examination regulations.

48 The submission of a thesis is at the discretion of the candidate. A candidate is advised, but not required, to seek the agreement of his/her Supervisor prior to submission. Postgraduate students whose thesis is under examination are considered as registered students of the university for the duration of the examination. Such students may be afforded different rights and privileges to students who fully register for an academic year.

49 The [Director of Teaching and Learning](#) (Postgraduate) in consultation with the Supervisor nominates an external examiner and an internal examiner to the [Dean of Graduate Studies](#) (a standard nomination form is issued by the Academic Registry). Two external examiners must be nominated in the case of candidates who are members of staff of the University. In other exceptional circumstances where it is not possible to nominate an internal examiner, a case may be made to the Dean of Graduate Studies for two external examiners to be appointed. The external examiner should be a recognised independent expert in the candidate's field of study. The external examiner should not be a collaborator in the candidate's research, nor be a recent graduate of the College. The internal examiner must be a member of the academic staff and cannot be the candidate's supervisor but may be a member of the student's Thesis Committee. The internal examiner should not be a collaborator in the student's research. Should the Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) be an internal examiner or the Supervisor, a pro- Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) should be appointed by the Head of School. The Dean of Graduate Studies is the final arbiter regarding the suitability of examiners. In the case of PhD theses, both examiners should, individually, complete preliminary reports [hereafter 'the pre-viva report'] and, one week before the viva voce examination, the examiners should submit these reports to the Academic Registry and should exchange them with one another. Following the viva voce (that is, on the same day), examiners should complete a joint report [hereafter 'the post-viva report'] which the internal examiner or Chair of the viva voce should submit on the same day, to the academic registry. In the case of research Master's theses, where a viva voce is not needed, examiners should submit independent reports to Academic Registry. Where a viva voce is needed, examiners should also complete a 'post-viva report' and the internal examiner or chair of the viva voce should submit the latter to academic registry on the same day as the viva voce examination. Examiners' names are presented to Council in consolidated form once a year for formal approval.

50 A viva voce examination is a normal requirement of the examination of a Ph.D. candidate. For a Masters examination a viva voce will be arranged at the request of either examiner or the Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate). The internal examiner is the official point of contact for the external examiner to do with all issues of the viva voce examination and has overall responsibility for organising it. The internal examiner should submit the two individual pre-viva reports and joint report to the Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies on the day of the examination. Requests from the candidate for a viva voce will be considered by the Dean of Graduate Studies. It is the Internal Examiner's responsibility, in conjunction with the School administrative staff and Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate), to arrange the date of, and accommodation for, the viva voce. The viva voce should normally be chaired by the Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) who may delegate that role to a head of discipline or other senior academic to act as an independent Chair.

51 The role of the Chair is to clarify College regulations, where appropriate, and to ensure that the viva voce is conducted in a courteous and professional manner. The Chair must intervene if the examiners do not adhere to these regulations. While there is no specified length for a viva voce examination, when examination exceeds 2.5 hours the Chair should offer the student and examiners a comfort break of 10 minutes. Where there are two external examiners or where the joint viva voce report cannot be submitted on the day of the viva voce examination, the Chair should ensure that the reports are submitted no later than one week after the date of the viva voce examination.

52 The conduct of the examination is the responsibility of the examiners, in consultation with the Chair of the viva voce. The only parties who may be involved in any discussion of the proposed result of the thesis under examination prior to the viva voce are as follows: the internal and external examiners and the Chair. Application must be made to the [Director of Teaching and Learning](#) (Postgraduate) in advance of the viva if it is proposed to run the viva voce on any other basis than that of a live face-to-face examination with all participants in the same venue. The Supervisor, or under exceptional circumstances and with the prior agreement of the Dean of Graduate Studies, other cognate person, has the right to be present at the viva voce examination purely as an observer unless the student wishes otherwise, in which case they would need to inform the Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) in advance.

In particular circumstances, the Dean of Graduate Studies is empowered to exercise his/her discretion to permit a departure from the normal regulations in relation to the composition of the viva voce panel and/or the procedure by which the viva voce is to operate.

53 Where there are two external examiners involved in examining a thesis, it must be decided at the viva voce examination which of them should replace the internal examiner in the role of checking, approving and informing the Dean of Graduate Studies that the requested corrections have been carried out satisfactorily.

54 Students are not required to travel out of Dublin for a viva voce. If they agree to do so, the expenses incurred are a matter for the School concerned. If a viva voce cannot be arranged in Dublin because it does not suit the external examiner, a second external examiner may be appointed, and, in due programme, both reports considered.

55 In the case of a Master's degree the examiners may propose that (i) the degree be awarded for the thesis as it stands, (ii) the degree be awarded for the thesis subject to minor corrections, for which two months are allowed from the time of notification, (iii) the thesis be referred for major revision and subsequent re-examination, for which six months are normally allowed from the time of notification, or (iv) be failed. When examiners propose either failure, or referral of a thesis for revision, they must hold a viva voce examination. The candidate must be informed of the reason for the viva voce. A thesis may only be referred for major revision once: in other words, option (iii) above is not available to examiners on re-submission.

56 In the case of a Ph.D. thesis the examiners may propose that (i) the degree be awarded for the thesis as it stands, (ii) the degree be

awarded for the thesis subject to minor corrections, for which two months are allowed from the time of notification (three months for students on the part-time register), (iii) the thesis be referred for major revision and subsequent re-examination, for which six months are normally allowed from the time of notification (nine months for students on the part-time register), (iv) a lower degree be awarded, if necessary following minor corrections to the thesis or (v) the thesis be failed. A thesis may only be referred for major revision once: in other words, option (iii) above is not available to examiners on re-submission.

57 When there is disagreement between examiners as to whether a thesis should be passed as it stands or passed with minor corrections, the [Dean of Graduate Studies](#) will adjudicate. Where there is disagreement between examiners as to whether a thesis should be referred for major revision and re-examination, awarded a lower degree or failed, the Dean of Graduate Studies, through the relevant Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate), will attempt to achieve an agreement between examiners on the programme to be adopted. If agreement is not reached, the Dean of Graduate Studies will propose that new examiners be appointed. All reports will be sent to the Dean of Graduate Studies.

58 The texts of the external and internal examiners' reports are initially available only to the Dean of Graduate Studies, the Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) and the Supervisor. However, candidates are entitled to see the reports relating to their examination on written request. Such requests should be addressed to the Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate).

59 Corrections required by examiners must be made before results are submitted to Council. A letter is required from the internal examiner certifying that corrections have been carried out satisfactorily. Minor corrections should be completed within two months of the candidate being informed of corrections required (three months for students on the part-time register). If the examiners recommend that the thesis be referred for revision, this means that re-examination is required (though a second viva voce is not permitted) and the candidate must register and pay a revision fee (see the [Academic Registry](#) website). Under exceptional circumstances, and with the prior permission of the Dean of Graduate Studies, revised theses may be submitted up to an absolute maximum of two years after the original date of submission. Such late submissions will be subject to a further revision fee. A thesis can only be referred for such major revision once – and a thesis can therefore only be examined twice in total before a final decision on it is reached.

APPEAL AGAINST DECISION OF EXAMINERS

60 Where a viva voce of a thesis has been held, and the thesis referred back the award of a lower degree, or outright failure is recommended, the [Dean of Graduate Studies](#) shall inform the candidate of the verdict prior to the submission of the examiners' reports to the Council. A student may appeal the decision of the examiners (see Section 1 Paragraph 71 for further details). Appeals will be entertained only on the grounds stated above in Section 1 Paragraph 71 i.e., in cases amounting to a reasonable claim that the examination was unfair. The candidate's name is then withheld from Council until after the hearing of the appeal.

61 In cases where re-examination is recommended it should be the work as originally submitted (or of the most recent examined version if revisions were carried out). If the student wishes to decide if the original or revised version should be examined this will be taken into account, but the Dean of Graduate Studies or the relevant appeals committee (depending on the level of the appeal) will make the final decision

M.LITT., M.Sc., Ph.D., HIGHER DOCTORATE

62 Master in Letters (M.Litt.)

A student registered for the degree of M.Litt. is required to carry out research in literature, language, philosophy, history, politics, economics, social sciences, psychology, education, geography or other cognate branch of learning.

The minimum period of research before which a thesis can be submitted is one year from the date of registration, and the maximum period two years. In the case of part-time registration, the minimum period of research before a thesis can be submitted is two years from the date of registration and the maximum period three years.

63 Master in Science (M.Sc. (Ind.))

A student registered for the degree of M.Sc. (by research only) is required to carry out research in a relevant Science.

The minimum period of research before which a thesis can be submitted is one year from the date of registration, and the maximum period two years. In the case of part-time registration, the minimum period of research before a thesis can be submitted is two years from the date of registration and the maximum period three years.

The degree of Magister in Scientiis (Indagatio) M.Sc. (Ind.) will be conferred upon students who successfully complete Master in Science research programmes.

64 Doctor in Philosophy (Ph.D.)

The regulations for the degree of Ph.D. are the same as those for the degrees of M.Litt. and M.Sc. except as set out below.

The minimum qualifications for [admission](#) as a Ph.D. student are higher than those for admission as an M.Litt. or M.Sc. student. In particular, applicants must show evidence of marked aptitude for research.

More difficult topics and more extensive and deeper research are required for the Ph.D. than for the M.Litt. or M.Sc. The minimum period of research before which a thesis can be submitted is two years from the date of registration, and the maximum period four years. When part-time registration is permitted, the minimum period of research before a thesis can be submitted is three years from the date of registration, and the maximum period six years (unless the student has changed over from the full-time register in which case the maximum combined period on the full-time and part-time register is five years in total).

65 Higher Doctorates

Introduction: The degrees of Doctor in Divinity (D.D.), Doctor in Laws (LL.D.), Doctor in Letters (Litt.D.), Doctor in Music (Mus.D.), and Doctor in Science (Sc.D.) are awarded to candidates who are judged by the [University Council](#) to have made an outstanding contribution to the advancement of knowledge, as evidenced by the publication of their work. The level of attainment required for a higher doctorate is substantially higher than that required for the degree of Ph.D.

The following are the major criteria used by the Graduate Studies Committee Higher Doctorates sub-committee and the assessors when judging an application:

- a) By their publications, candidates are recognised as being of international standing in their field.
- b) Their contribution has been sustained over a number of years.
- c) Their contribution has led to major innovations or major new additions to knowledge in their discipline.
- d) Their contribution contains seminal publications that have led to developments by others.

66 Admission Requirements: Applicants must be graduates of the University of Dublin, of not less than eight years' standing to be eligible for application to these degrees.

67 Application Procedure: Application must be submitted electronically to the [Dean of Graduate Studies](#) on the prescribed form, and include the following:

- 1) A covering letter including the name of the degree applied for and a curriculum vitae.
- 2) A statement about the nature and extent of the applicant's contribution to the field of study.
- 3) A list of publications that the applicant intends to submit.
- 4) A statement that the work has not been submitted as an exercise for a degree at this or any other university.
- 5) A statement that the listed publications are the applicant's original work. Where work done in co-operation with others is to be submitted, the applicant should comment on his/her role in the work.

68 Applications are assessed by the Higher Doctorates sub-committee of the Graduate Studies Committee. On its recommendation, candidates are admitted to the register once a year in September. If admitted to the register, the candidate must submit to the Dean of Graduate Studies when requested an electronic version of the corpus of publications which are to be assessed. The publications should be accompanied by a short commentary not exceeding one thousand words indicating how each publication contributes to the total corpus of the candidate's research. The electronic version of the corpus and additional materials must be submitted as a single electronic file. In exceptional circumstances, candidates may also be required to submit up to three full sets of the corpus of publications in hard copy. Where hard copy submission is required, all materials other than books must be secured in one hardback folder, or more if necessary, each containing a title and contents page. A candidate should clearly state which part of the submission, if any, has been submitted for any other academic award. Hardcopy materials submitted may not be returned. Incomplete submissions will not be accepted. The onus is on the candidate to ensure that their submission is in the required format.

69 An application fee of €500 (non-refundable) is payable on applying to establish a prima facie case. On admittance a fee is payable by all candidates on a one-off basis. If the appraisal is not completed by the end of the academic year, the candidate will not be required to pay a further fee; however, it will be necessary for him/her to register for the next academic year.

70 Assessment: Appraisal is made by scholars distinguished in the particular area of research. Should it prove impossible for the Dean of Graduate Studies to secure the services of appropriate scholars the University reserves the right not to proceed with the examination and all fees will be refunded to the candidate. Two assessors, who must be external to the University of Dublin, are appointed by the Dean of Graduate Studies in consultation with the appropriate Dean of the Faculty who also submits a list of at least three suitable assessors from which the Dean of Graduate Studies will choose two. The assessors have the power to question the candidate upon his/her work, either in writing or by viva voce.

71 The degree will be awarded on the independent and unequivocal recommendation of both assessors to [Council](#). In the event of a disagreement between two assessors, the Dean of Graduate Studies shall appoint a third assessor whose recommendation shall be final. There is no appeal against the decision of Council.

72 Closing date: Application must be made on the prescribed form to the [Dean of Graduate Studies](#) to reach the office by 25 August 2025. Late applications are not considered.