

# Regulations for the Degree of Master of Philosophy

These Regulations govern the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy at Aberystwyth University, henceforth the University. They apply equally to the degree of LLM by Research.

The degree of Master of Philosophy may be awarded by the University in recognition of the successful completion of a course of further study and research, the results of which are judged to constitute a critical evaluation and analysis of a body of knowledge and/or an original contribution to knowledge.

On completion of an MPhil, graduates will have attained at least Level M, as defined by the QAA's Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

## Modes of Study

1. A candidate may study for the degree by one of the following methods:

A by pursuing full-time research in the University;

B by pursuing full-time research in an external place of employment;

C by pursuing part-time research in the University;

D by pursuing part-time research externally;

E by pursuing part-time research in the University as a full-time or a part-time member of staff.

2. It is possible, in appropriate cases, to transfer from one method of the regulations to another, e.g., from full-time (Method A) to part-time (Method C) and vice-versa. In such cases the University will determine a revised minimum period of study and will fix the earliest date for the submission of the thesis.

3. In the case of part-time members of staff, candidature is restricted to contracted members of staff in possession of a degree, or equivalent qualification, holding a











# Regulations for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Approved for entry pre-September 2023

These Regulations govern the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at Aberystwyth University, henceforth the University.

The degree of Doctor of Philosophy may be awarded by the University in recognition of the successful completion of a scheme of further study and research, the results of which are judged to constitute an original contribution to learning and to give evidence of systematic study and of ability to relate the results of such study to the general body of knowledge in the subject.

References below to the thesis shall encompass alternative format submissions (see regulations 18-28 below) and practice-based submissions in creative arts (see regulation 17).

In judging the merit of a thesis submitted in candidature for the degree of PhD, the examiners shall bear in mind the standard and scope of work which it is reasonable to expect a capable and diligent student to present after a period of two or three years (as appropriate) of full-time study, or its part-time equivalent.

On completion of a Doctoral Degree, graduates will have attained Level D, as defined by the QAA's Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

The degree of Doctor of Philosophy may not be conferred *honoris causa*.

## **Modes of Study**

1.A candidate may study for the degree by one of the following methods:





















# Regulations for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Approved for entry from September 2023

These Regulations govern the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at Aberystwyth University, henceforth the University.

The degree of Doctor of Philosophy may be awarded by the University in recognition of the successful completion of a scheme of further study and research, the results of which are judged to constitute an original contribution to learning and to give evidence of systematic study and of ability to relate the results of such study to the general body of knowledge in the subject.

References below to the thesis shall encompass alternative format submissions (see regulations 17-27 below) and practice-based submissions in creative arts (see regulation 16).

In judging the merit of a thesis submitted in candidature for the degree of PhD, the examiners shall bear in mind the standard and scope of work which it is reasonable to expect a capable and diligent student to present after a period of three to four years of full-time study, or its part-time equivalent.

On completion of a Doctoral Degree, graduates will have attained Level D, as defined by the QAA's Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

## **Modes of Study**

1. A candidate may study for the degree by one of the following methods:

A - by pursuing full-time research in the University;

B - by pursuing full-time research in an external place of employment;



















# Regulations for the Award of the Degree of PhD (by Published Works)

Approved for entry from September 2023

The PhD by Published Works is a doctoral qualification based on research that has already been undertaken and published. These materials will be accompanied by a critical analysis making the case that the scope, coherence, significance and contribution to knowledge of the published works is equivalent to a PhD based on a research project conducted at the university.

The criteria for the award of the Degree of PhD (by Published Works) shall be the same as those established for the Degree of PhD.

'Published Works' may be defined as works which are in the public domain or which have at least been accepted for publication (provided that the candidate can provide adequate proof that this is the case). Works submitted for examination should not have been published more than ten years previous to the date of registration.

In line with research degree schemes which fall within the University's subject area of Creative and Performing Arts, the published works may take one or more of the following forms: artefacts, score, text, portfolio of original works, performance or exhibition. The submission shall be accompanied by any other items which may be required (e.g. a catalogue or audio or visual recording).

*On completion of a Doctoral degree, graduates will have attained Level D, as defined by the QAA's Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.*

## Eligibility of Candidates

1. Except as provided in Regulations 3 and 4 below, any candidate for the Degree of PhD (by Published Works) shall be a member of academic staff at Aberystwyth









# Regulations for Doctoral Degrees by Examination and Thesis or Portfolio [DProf]

These regulations govern the award of Doctoral Degrees by Examination and Thesis (Professional Doctorate – generically DProf – or a specifically named award) at Aberystwyth University. Professional and Practice-based Doctorates will be awarded in recognition of the successful completion of an approved taught programme of study, together with successful completion of further study and research.

Research projects in professional doctorates are normally located within the candidate's profession or practice. In practice-based or practitioner doctorates the candidate's output involves practice-related materials. For example, in the performing arts, the output involves a written component, which complements the practice-based element (this may be shorter than the traditional PhD thesis, and includes both reflection and context), and one or more other artefacts, such as a novel (for creative writing), a portfolio of work (for art and design), or one or more performance pieces (for theatre studies, dance or music).

Professional doctorates are rooted in an academic discipline as well as in a profession (education, engineering, law and so on). Candidates whose research arises out of practice alone, who are not working in an academically related professional field and who spend most of their time learning in their work environment rather than with the higher education provider would be more likely to complete a practice-based doctorate. In both practice-based and professional doctorate settings, the candidate's research may result directly in organisational or policy-related change.

The regulations are intended to enable qualified professionals to engage in high level Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and to study at Master's and up to doctoral level while remaining in employment and closely associated with their profession/workplace.













# Regulations for the Submission and Examination of Research Theses

- [Time Limits and Extensions](#)

1. The expectation is that candidates will submit their thesis within the time-limit laid down by regulation. A candidature may be suspended or a time-limit extended by the University, but in exceptional cases only.

2. Normally, suspensions/extensions will be granted only on compassionate grounds, or in cases of illness, serious domestic difficulties, inordinate professional commitments or unforeseen research difficulties which can be demonstrated to have adversely affected the candidate. A full and reasoned case, supported by appropriate medical or other independent evidence, must be made for consideration by the University. In the case of candidates who cite exceptional professional commitments, the request must be accompanied by written confirmation and description by the employer of the exceptional workload borne by the candidate.

3. A clear statement must be supplied, showing that the department concerned has evaluated the situation in which the candidate finds themselves and that it considers the requested extension to be appropriate. This should include a schedule of work leading to submission within the extended time limit proposed. The candidate should also provide a written statement.

4. Applications for suspensions/extensions must be routed via the candidate's supervisor and Faculty to the Graduate School.

- [Submission and Language of Thesis](#)

5. No later than three months before submission is expected, the candidate shall complete an Intention to Submit form which will initiate procedures for examination including nomination by the Department/Faculty of an external examiner(s). External examiners are expected to be appointed prior to



























## **Guidelines for the Conduct of Viva Voce Examinations by Electronic Means (Online Vivas)**

### **General Principles**

1. Following discussion with staff and students, the University has taken the view that the best way of conducting the viva voce examination required for all research degrees is face to face, with all parties present together in Aberystwyth. This ensures the integrity of the examination and provides the most conducive atmosphere for students to defend their work. The viva is not a formality and can have a major impact on the outcome of the assessment.

2. Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, electronic vivas were only allowed in exceptional circumstances, subject to certain conditions and with the approval of the Head of the Graduate School and written consent of all parties. During the Covid-19 pandemic, in light of the difficulty of planning and holding vivas requiring travel to Aberystwyth and appropriate health and safety measures for face-to-face activities, and the importance of timely examination, online vivas became the default option.

3. The experience of online vivas has been largely positive. Staff and students have become more comfortable with the technology and there are benefits to using it, in reduced financial and environmental costs and greater scope to hold vivas in a timely fashion and with the most appropriate external examiner. While Research Degrees Committee still believes that face-to-face vivas provide the best experience, it is more relaxed about permitting online vivas where the participants are content. The approval of the Head of the Graduate School is still required and a case should be made for an online viva, but circumstances do not have to be exceptional.

4. An online viva may be requested where all participants would prefer one and have no concerns about its conduct and where:

I. Cost, travel or other issues make an electronic viva preferable, particularly where it would be difficult to proceed with a face-to-face viva or where there would be an unacceptable delay.

II. Agreed arrangements for a face-to-face viva had to be terminated due to unexpected circumstances such as severe weather or illness of one of the participants. The normal action would be to postpone the





