Admission for a research degree

Scope
All full and part-time research students, including those registered on a validated research degree programme and academic and administrative staff who have a responsibility for overseeing the research degree admissions process.

Senate Regulations:
Regulation 24 – Doctoral Programmes
Regulation 23 – Masters Degree by Research

Date approved/re-approved
APPSC 22 April 2009
Update approved Education Committee 15 June 2012

Date for review
To be reviewed on a periodic basis, with allowance for minor annual updates of roles and responsibilities by Graduate School Committee, as required.

To be read in conjunction with Section 9 of the University’s Quality Manual.
Admission for a Research Degree

The following statements should be read alongside the University’s Admissions Policy (currently out for consultation) and the Regulations for Doctoral Programmes and Masters Degrees by Research. The statements are intended to provide further clarity on the policies and processes that assure the quality and enhancement of research degree provision across the University and which are outlined in the Framework for Research Degrees Provision.

All applications for a research degree require approval from the School Board of Studies on the recommendation of the Senior Tutor/Director of Research.

The University's Research Degree Framework and Regulations apply equally to partnership provision unless different arrangements have been agreed between the University and the partner institution and have received University approval. Details will be set out in the Memorandum of Agreement for the partnership and in information provided to students.

Principles

- Applicants will only be admitted to a research degree programme if there is suitable expertise within the School/Department to supervise the proposed research;
- All candidates will be appointed a supervisory team, consisting of at least two supervisors, should their application be successful. One supervisor will be designated as a student’s first supervisor;
- Candidates will be allocated a supervisory team in accordance with the University’s policy for the approval of research supervisors;
- Students are expected to familiarise themselves with the respective roles and responsibilities of the student and the supervisor(s);
- Prospective students must indicate how they propose to fund their period of research in order to ensure that neither they nor their supervisor(s) is put under any undue pressure to either submit a thesis before the research has been completed or to recommend that a student be withdrawn, or be required to submit for a lesser degree, because of financial reasons;
- An applicant may apply at any time during the year to be admitted as a research student but all prospective students will be expected to register in either October or February of each academic year;
- All prospective doctoral students will be registered initially as MPhil/PhD students (or equivalent) except in those circumstances where a student has transferred from another institution and has provided suitable and appropriate evidence that permits direct registration as a PhD student (or equivalent);
- Applicants for the award of PhD through the submission of prior publications should be nominated by a member of the University's professoriate who must demonstrate a common research interest with the candidate.

Entry Requirements

Prospective students are expected to meet the following:

- hold a good honours degree (normally no less than a second class honours degree from a UK University or an equivalent qualification) in an appropriate subject. Some subjects also require an appropriate Masters qualification;
- be able to demonstrate proficiency in the use of oral and written English;
- an aptitude and motivation to undertake a course of independent research to doctoral level.

Prospective students whose mother tongue is not English must meet any one or a combination of the following:

- A score of 6.5 in IELTS
A score of 550 in TOEFL
The award of a Masters degree the teaching of which was in English

Prospective students who do not meet the English Language requirements may be expected to attend pre-sessional English classes before an offer may be considered.

All prospective students, except City graduates, are required to provide certified evidence of relevant qualifications in support of their application.

Candidates applying to study for a PhD through the submission of prior publications must provide a list of the publications upon which the assessment for the degree is to be based. Publications should be in English and co-authored publications must be signed off by all contributing authors. Candidates must also provide an outline of how their publications demonstrate an original and significant contribution to their particular discipline. Candidates must additionally have professorial support for their application.

NB: International students must demonstrate sufficient maintenance funds to cover the first 9 months of the first year of study to qualify for a visa before being permitted to follow a course of research. International students must contact the Student Centre for clarification on any visa implications during any application for a research degree at the University.