

Professional Doctorate Regulations 2016/2017

The regulations govern the progression and award of the Doctor of Philosophy (Professional) at the University of Lincoln.

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Professional Doctorate Regulations 2016/2017

1. General

- 1.1 These Regulations establish the conditions under which the University of Lincoln (hereafter referred to as the 'University') shall award the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Professional).
- 1.2 These Regulations come into force on 7 March 2016 and their provisions apply to all students enrolling on or after that date.
- 1.3 The University undertakes to take all reasonable steps to provide the teaching, examination, assessment and other educational services associated with the Doctor of Philosophy (Professional) as set out in these Regulations and other University documents. It does not, however, guarantee the provision of such services.
- 1.4 Should industrial action or circumstances beyond the control of the University interfere with its ability to provide educational services, the University undertakes to use all reasonable steps to minimise any resultant disruption to its services.
- 1.5 The University Registrar may exceptionally agree, on an individual student basis, a variation to the Regulations. Any such arrangement shall be reported to Academic Board as soon as practicable.
- 1.6 The University reserves the right to alter its awards and programmes and to modify its Regulations for the admission or progression of students and for the conferment of awards. The Regulations shall be reviewed and updated periodically in line with developments in University policy and practice. There may be differences in Regulations as they apply to different cohorts of students registered for the same award.
- 1.7 While the University reserves the right to modify its Regulations at any time, the University shall take into consideration its duties under the Consumer Rights Act 2015, the potential timescales for introducing changes and their effect on current cohorts of students. Changes shall not normally be introduced for implementation in the current year of study unless it was demonstrable that there would be no detriment to students; changes would normally take effect in the following academic year. The University shall adhere to its policy regarding course closures, suspensions and changes as appropriate and will consult with students regarding in-year changes.

2. Definition of a Professional Doctorate

- 2.1 The Professional Doctorate is a doctoral research programme of equivalent standing to the Doctor of Philosophy with a focus on research and professional practice which aims to aid the dissemination, development and management of a range of professional practice and policy development. It shall require the completion of 540 academic credits, including a taught element which shall not exceed 180 academic credits.
- 2.2 In accordance with these Regulations the Professional Doctorate may be awarded to a candidate who has successfully completed and passed both the taught and research components of the programme and demonstrably made

an independent and original research contribution to a specific professional area.

- 2.3 The degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Professional) may include a range of disciplines or professional practice areas but its title shall remain the same. The award-holder shall be entitled to utilise the pre-nominal title of 'Doctor' or 'Dr'.

3. Programme Structure

- 3.1 The degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Professional) shall comprise a total of 540 credit points.
- 3.2 The taught component of Professional Doctorate programmes shall include modules at Level 7 FHEQ up to one third of the overall programme, i.e. 180 credits may be set at Level 7. The remainder of the programmes shall be made up of Level 8 study.
- 3.3 The taught component of the Professional Doctorate awards shall normally consist of a structured programme of taught modules.
- 3.4 A Doctor of Philosophy (Professional) may be awarded to a student who has satisfied the academic credit requirements for the award for which they are registered and has:
- (i) successfully completed the taught component of the award; and
 - (ii) presented and defended at oral examination a research thesis, portfolio, artefact or other form of assessable output to the satisfaction of the examiners.
- 3.5 Through successful completion of both the taught and research components, a student should also have demonstrated:
- (i) the creation and interpretation of new knowledge through original research or other advanced scholarship, of a quality to satisfy peer review, extend the boundaries of the discipline, and merit publication;
 - (ii) the systematic acquisition and understanding of a substantial body of knowledge which is at the forefront of an academic discipline or area of professional practice;
 - (iii) the general ability to conceptualise, design and implement a project for the generation of new knowledge, applications or understanding at the boundaries of the discipline, and to adjust the project design in the light of unforeseen problems; and
 - (iv) a detailed understanding of applicable techniques for research and advanced academic enquiry.
- 3.6 Successful candidates should also be able to:
- (i) make informed judgements on complex issues in specialist fields, often in the absence of complete data, and be able to communicate their ideas

and conclusions clearly and effectively to specialist and non-specialist audiences;

- (ii) continue to undertake pure and/or applied research and development at an advanced level, contributing substantially to the development of new techniques, ideas or approaches; and will have:
- (iii) the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and largely autonomous initiative in complex and unpredictable situations, in professional or equivalent environments.

4. Admission

- 4.1 Admission is the decision by which the University agrees to allow an individual to enrol as a student of the University to follow a programme of studies at the University.
- 4.2 An individual seeking admission to a programme of studies provided at the University shall act in good faith and disclose any fact that is material to the University's decision to admit the individual as a student. An applicant shall not mislead the University nor allow it to be misled in respect of any part of their application for admission.
- 4.3 The University shall only admit those candidates who can demonstrate that they are sufficiently qualified and capable of achieving successful completion of the Professional Doctorate within the maximum period of registration. The scope of the thesis, portfolio, artefact or other form of assessable output shall be such that it is achievable within this timeframe.
- 4.4 The University's minimum entry requirements for Professional Doctorate programmes shall normally be as follows:
 - (i) a Second Class Honours degree from a UK university or a qualification which is regarded as equivalent to such an Honours degree, including overseas qualifications;
 - (ii) a Masters degree or a qualification which is regarded as equivalent to a Masters degree, including overseas qualifications;
 - (iii) the equivalent of two years' verifiable academic or practical experience of working in the relevant field in a professional capacity, excluding any experience gained as part of the first degree studies;
 - (iv) an applicant whose first language is not English must also demonstrate evidence of appropriate English language proficiency, normally defined as a minimum IELTS score of 6.5 (Overall Band Score), with 6.5 in all elements, or equivalent.
- 4.5 Possession of minimum entry qualification does not guarantee admission onto a Professional Doctorate programme.
- 4.6 The University shall consider for admission to programmes of study all applicants irrespective of age, disability or alternative need, ethnic origin,

gender, marital status, nationality, political or religious belief, or sexual orientation.

- 4.7 The University follows the national Credit Accumulation and Transfer Scheme (CATS) whereby it can formally evaluate applicants' prior experience and qualifications and offset them against standard entry requirements. An individual may be admitted with advanced standing to a programme of studies.
- 4.8 Accreditation of Prior Certified Learning (APCL) may be granted for formal learning from other institutions and credit can be awarded for experiential learning (APEL).
- 4.9 Full credit of 180 points may be given for the taught component on an advanced standing basis with a prior qualification (APCL) or experience (APEL), provided applicants can be shown to satisfy the programme's learning outcomes at the required level and can demonstrate the criteria referred to in 4.3.
- 4.10 Credit towards, or exemption from, the research component shall not be permitted.

5. Enrolment

- 5.1 Enrolment establishes an individual's status as a student of the University.
- 5.2 Enrolment is the agreement between the University and the student under which:
 - (i) The University provides a programme of studies for the student and makes available to the student the other academic services and facilities associated with that programme of studies;
 - (ii) The University, where appropriate, registers the student as a candidate for an award of the University;
 - (iii) The University confers the award for which the student is registered where the student satisfies the Board of Examiners of their entitlement to receive that award;
 - (iv) The University agrees to be bound by these Regulations;
 - (v) The student undertakes to pay the fee for the programme of studies and any other charges levied by the University in respect of the programme of studies and the provision of other academic services and facilities associated with the programme of studies. Students are expected to pay their fees, or make arrangements for the future payment of fees, at enrolment;
 - (vi) The student undertakes to do anything else required by the University that concerns the student's following of a programme of studies, receipt of other academic services and use of facilities associated with a programme of studies;
 - (vii) The student undertakes to be in attendance at the University;

- (viii) The student agrees to be bound by the University's Regulations.
- 5.3 An individual is not enrolled as a student unless they have completed the University's enrolment process.
- 5.4 A student may be enrolled to a programme of studies on a full-time or a part-time basis subject to the mode of study being validated and available.
- 5.5 An individual who is not enrolled as a student of the University shall not be allowed to follow any part of a programme of studies at the University or to be considered by a Board of Examiners.
- 5.6 It is the responsibility of an individual to seek their re-enrolment as a student of the University, as the formal renewal of the agreement between the University and the student. The formalities for re-enrolment are the same as those for first enrolment.
- 5.7 Re-enrolment shall normally take place on or around the anniversary of the student's first enrolment to a particular programme of studies. Re-enrolment is subject to annual deadlines, and eligible students who fail to attend for re-enrolment may be deemed by the University to have terminated their enrolment, and the University's obligations to them.
- 5.8 A student who has failed to re-enrol may be considered for re-admission to the programme of studies.

Period of Enrolment

Level	Mode	Minimum	Maximum
Postgraduate Certificate	FT	4 months	12 months
	PT	8 months	16 months
Postgraduate Diploma	FT	8 months	24 months
	PT	16 months	32 months
Masters	FT	12 months	36 months
	PT	24 months	48 months
Professional Doctorate	FT	27 months	48 months
	PT	41 months	72 months

6. Registration

- 6.1 Registration is the recording of an individual's candidacy for an award of the University.
- 6.2 A student who is enrolled to a programme of studies of the University leading to an award of the University shall be registered by the University as a candidate for that award.

- 6.3 An individual who is enrolled by an institution authorised by the University to offer a programme of studies leading to an award of the University shall complete their registration as a candidate for an award of the University.
- 6.4 An individual registered as a candidate for an award of the University shall only be eligible for that award where the Board of Examiners is satisfied as to their entitlement to receive that award.
- 6.5 The Chair of the Board of Examiners may, except where restricted by professional body requirements, agree, on an exceptional basis, to extend a student's registration beyond that set out in the programme documentation. The extension must be notified to Registry (Student Administration).

7. University Records on Students

- 7.1 It is the student's responsibility to inform the University in writing or by other designated procedures of changes address, and of other relevant information, such as change of name.
- 7.2 Information about a student shall be managed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. Access to University records on students is confined to staff who require access in connection with the performance of their duties. All persons maintaining or having access to student records are instructed that the information therein is confidential. Under certain circumstances however, the University may have a legal obligation to disclose information, for example to Local Authorities, Sponsors, or the Police.
- 7.3 A student may access their individual record by submitting a data subject access request to the University's Information Compliance Officer.

8. Attendance

- 8.1 Full-time and part-time students are expected to be in attendance at the University during term-time including any periods of formal examination or other assessment. In the case of a student following a Professional Doctorate by distance learning, attendance means demonstrable activity on the programme of studies.
- 8.2 Each School is responsible for monitoring student attendance and registers for the taught component will normally be taken on a regular basis. There is a statutory responsibility placed upon universities to monitor attendance of international students who are in the UK on a Tier 4 visa and to report to the Home Office when a student has been found not to be engaging with their programme. International students attending the University of Lincoln must comply with the conditions of their visa. In addition, students are required to note that the University of Lincoln must comply with its legal obligations to the United Kingdom Visas and Immigration (UKVI) as a Tier 4 sponsor. Students found to be in breach of the conditions of their visa in relation to attendance will, unless they are able to show good reasons/extenuating circumstances, have their Tier 4 sponsorship withdrawn and, consequently, their enrolment at the University terminated. For the full list of conditions of the Tier 4 visa, please refer to the UKVI website at <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-visas-and-immigration>.

- 8.3 To ensure compliance with UKVI rules, all international students must show evidence that they have the right to remain and study in the UK. Students who have limited leave to remain in the UK must, on request by the University, present evidence that they have valid leave to be in the UK and have not allowed their leave to lapse during their study.
- 8.4 The University may temporarily suspend from study a student who is unable to provide one of the following on request:
- evidence of valid leave to be in the UK
 - proof that an in-time visa application to remain has been submitted
 - proof that they have exited the UK
- 8.5 A student whose study has been temporarily suspended shall be allowed fifteen working days to provide the evidence requested. If evidence is not provided in that period, the University shall terminate the student's enrolment.
- 8.6 A student whose enrolment has been terminated under this regulation may appeal in writing to the Tier 4 Compliance team within ten working days of termination of their enrolment. Such appeals must be sent to tier4visa@lincoln.ac.uk and supported by appropriate evidence to show why the termination was not justified. The Tier 4 Compliance team shall make the final decision in respect of the student's status and communicate this to the student.
- 8.7 Where a student is not in attendance, the University may suspend or terminate the student's enrolment. The University shall act fairly in taking such a decision.
- 8.8 The University shall adopt a policy on student attendance under these regulations, which shall from time to time be reviewed, and, where necessary, revised.

9. Interruption of Studies

- 9.1 Any period of interruption, whether during the taught or research component of the Professional Doctorate programme, shall not exceed more than two years in total across the duration of the award. Where approved, the period(s) of interruption shall be added to the student's original term of registration on the programme. In the case of an unforeseeable event such as a military posting overseas, a student may be required to interrupt their studies for a period greater than the normal maximum. Cases such as this will be considered on an individual basis with students submitting extenuating circumstances to the programme leadership who will decide whether an additional period of interruption above and beyond the two year normal maximum is deemed appropriate.

Interruption During the Taught Component

- 9.2 A student may apply to the University to interrupt their studies for a specific period of time. Students who wish to interrupt during the taught component may contact the Student Support Centre for advice and guidance.
- 9.3 Students remain liable for the fees for the academic year in which they have interrupted their studies. If the fees have been paid in full the student shall not

be liable for any further fees for the year in which they resume their studies and complete the year of study, provided that the student resumes studies at the same point as initial interruption. The overriding principle is that the student will pay for one complete period of study (for full-time students this would normally be one academic year) although this may be spread over two academic cycles.

- 9.4 A student interrupting during the taught component shall normally be expected to return to their programme of studies in the following academic year at the point in the teaching or assessment calendar equivalent to when study was previously interrupted. Where students interrupt at the semester break this may be relatively straightforward but where an interruption has been at another point this will require careful monitoring by the Programme Team. Academic judgement may be used when deciding upon the relevant point of return to study.
- 9.5 A student returning after an interruption of studies shall enrol only upon those modules not previously assessed, or where reassessment has been agreed by the Board of Examiners. Any assessments already completed will be carried forward.
- 9.6 The University cannot guarantee that changes to a programme of studies will not be made during a student's period of interruption. Where changes have occurred the Board of Examiners, in consultation with Registry, will make appropriate arrangements to enable the student to complete the programme of studies.
- 9.7 During a period of interruption of studies the student and the University remain bound by these Regulations.

Interruption During the Research Component

- 9.8 During the research component, a student may request the College Research Degrees Board to approve a period(s) of interruption to their studies

10. Termination of Enrolment and Registration

- 10.1 A student's enrolment and registration will terminate when have they completed a programme of studies and either has an award conferred by the Board of Examiners or the Board of Examiners decides that the student is ineligible for an award. Students who have exceed their period of registration shall also be deemed to have had their enrolment and registration terminated.
- 10.2 A student whose enrolment and registration had been terminated by the University shall not be eligible to return to study on the same programme of studies.

Termination by a Student

- 10.3 A student may terminate their enrolment prior to the completion of a programme of studies. Any obligations incurred between the University and the student, prior to the termination of enrolment, remain binding. A student who notifies the University of the intention to terminate their studies will be strongly encouraged to first discuss the matter with an academic member of staff. Students wishing to withdraw permanently from the course will be

invited to attend an interview at the Student Support Centre and, if this has not already been done, complete the withdrawal form.

Termination on Academic Grounds (Taught Component Stage)

- 10.4 Where a student has exhausted all reassessment opportunities and has not met the general pass standard for the current level of study, including any variations agreed by Academic Board in order to satisfy professional body regulations, the student will be deemed to have failed and their enrolment on the programme terminated.
- 10.5 The University is also entitled to terminate the enrolment of a student who fails to fulfil the attendance requirements (see section 8). In such circumstances, a student shall receive five working days notice in writing to attend a Panel meeting chaired by the Head of School (or nominee) where the student will be given the opportunity to provide adequate reasons and/or evidence as to why their enrolment should not be terminated. If the Panel rejects the reasons or evidence submitted the student will be advised in writing that their enrolment has been terminated and their right to appeal the decision.
- 10.6 A student whose enrolment has been terminated in accordance with section 10.5 may lodge an appeal within ten working days of the date of the termination letter. An appeal must be lodged on the form provided (available from Secretariat) on either of the following grounds only:
- (a) that there were extenuating circumstances adversely affecting the student's attendance which for valid reasons the student did not make known to the Extenuating Circumstances Panel at the appropriate time either in sufficient detail or at all. Normally, the only acceptable valid reasons will be that the student was unable or incapable of bringing the circumstances to the Panel's attention. The student must provide documentary evidence to support their claims.
 - (b) that there was a material error in the conduct of the process that was of such a nature as to cause reasonable doubt as to whether the outcome might have been different had the error not occurred.
- 10.7 The student must provide all material and evidence that they wish to be considered in support of their appeal at the time that the appeal is made.
- 10.8 The Appeals Officer will forward the appeal to the Director of Student Affairs for consideration. The appeal should normally be completed within 20 working days. In considering the appeal, the Director of Student Affairs has the discretion to make enquiries of such persons (including the student, tutors, programme leaders, unit co-ordinators and the visa compliance team) as they deem necessary.
- 10.9 The Director of Student Affairs shall notify the Appeals Officer of the outcome of the appeal and give reasons for the decision. The Director of Student Affairs may confirm the decision to terminate the student's enrolment or reinstate the student onto their programme of study. This decision is final and will be notified to the student in writing by the Appeals Officer. If termination of the student's enrolment is confirmed, the Appeals Officer will issue a

Completion of Procedures letter.

- 10.10 In the event of termination as set out in the paragraphs above, where the student has accumulated the requisite number of credits, the Board of Examiners may confer an alternative exit award. Individual programme specific Assessment Regulations set out the detail of exit awards that are available. A student may receive only one award in respect of any programme of study. A candidate who accepts a lower award rather than taking the opportunity to be reassessed may not normally elect to subsequently be reassessed.

Termination on Academic Grounds (Research Component Stage)

- 10.11 A student who fails to make academic progress at the research stage of the Professional Doctorate programme may have their programme terminated by the College Research Degrees Board.
- 10.12 The University shall exercise reasonably the powers provided by these Regulations and follow a procedure that treats the student fairly.

11. Extenuating Circumstances

- 11.1 Extenuating circumstances are exceptional and unforeseen circumstances, beyond a student's control, which may have had a serious and adverse effect upon their assessed work.
- 11.2 It is the responsibility of the student to attend examinations, submit coursework for assessment as required and by the due date, and to provide the University Extenuating Circumstances Panel, in advance of the meeting of the Board of Examiners, with any relevant information on exceptional and unforeseen circumstances that may have adversely affected their assessment performance.
- 11.3 If a student claims that their performance has been adversely affected by extenuating circumstances, it is their responsibility to ensure that the evidence of such extenuating circumstances is provided, documented and independently substantiated, at the earliest possible opportunity.
- 11.4 Students may not normally use any disability or illness that is catered for by a Student Wellbeing Centre Needs Assessment as the basis for an Extenuating Circumstances application. The only exception to this might be the unexpected emergence of an underlying disability or illness which required further support. An Extenuating Circumstances application might be made in such circumstances but would be subject to the normal requirement for supporting evidence.
- 11.5 Where there is documented evidence of extenuating circumstances that will prevent attendance at an examination, or submission of a final piece of coursework on the agreed date, this should be presented to the Extenuating Circumstances Panel in advance of the assessment date. Where there are known and documented circumstances that will take place at a future date (for example, a hospital appointment for an operation which coincides with a formal examination) students are encouraged to submit these applications in advance. Though this may not be normal practice there may be some circumstances where an application should be made in advance.

- 11.6 The Board of Examiners shall normally treat the submission of extenuating circumstances as a request by the student for the Board to void the mark for the original assessment(s) to which the claim relates. Consequently, where a claim of extenuating circumstances is successful, a student shall normally be required to be reassessed, on the basis of a first sitting, in the relevant assessment items.
- 11.7 Circumstances accepted as valid by the University Extenuating Circumstances Panel are forwarded to the relevant Board of Examiners which shall consider whether or not the circumstances have affected performance in assessment and apply the decision concerning assessment.
- 11.8 Claims received too late for consideration by the Extenuating Circumstances Panel, and hence by the Board of Examiners, will be accepted only if the student can demonstrate there was good reason for the late application. Normally, the only valid reasons shall be that the student was unable or incapable of bringing the circumstances to the attention of the Panel at the appropriate time. The time limit for receipt of late applications is ten working days following the release of results.
- 11.9 The responsibilities of students and Boards of Examiners in respect of circumstances that might adversely affect a student's performance are set out in detail in Annex B.
- 11.10 A claim for extenuating circumstances shall not be available to a student as a means to avoid an application of these Regulations to allegations of having committed an academic offence in relation to assessment.

12. Taught Component Assessment Regulations

- 12.1 The marks and grades awarded by Examiners are a matter of academic judgement for those Examiners. Marks and grades ratified by a Board of Examiners cannot be questioned on the grounds of academic judgement.
- 12.2 Where not elsewhere provided in these Regulations, the Chair of the Academic Board (or nominee), is competent to act to ensure fairness to a student in the operation of the University's assessment procedures in respect of such matters as the conduct of Boards of Examiners and review and appeals. This competence is limited to procedural matters and does not extend to substantive decisions on assessment or the exercise of academic judgement in respect of assessment.
- 12.3 The Assessment Regulations for an accredited award may take account of the assessment requirements of an accrediting body but the accrediting body's regulations shall not normally take precedence over these Regulations.
- 12.4 All assessments shall be conducted in the English language except where otherwise provided by the validation of a programme of studies.
- 12.5 At enrolment, students are provided with a unique examination identification number for anonymous marking purposes. This is printed on the Student identity card which students are required to take to formal examinations and to use the anonymous identification number as their identification on all

formal examination paperwork.

- 12.6 The University shall make reasonable adjustments as recommended by its Student Wellbeing Centre in respect of assessment arrangements for students with disabilities.
- 12.7 The University postgraduate examination timetable, including the timetable for students with individual requirements, is produced centrally by Registry and the final version of the examination timetable is published on the Portal.
- 12.8 Students are required to present themselves for examinations at the times and places specified by the Board of Examiners. Absence or non-submission of scripts shall result in failure, except where the Extenuating Circumstances Panel approves a claim relating to the assessment.
- 12.9 Students are required to submit coursework at the times and places formally notified to them. For those academic disciplines for which the University standard is Harvard referencing, the standards are set down in the 'Referencing Handbook: Harvard' available online, *via* mobile app or from the Library. Students should use the relevant handbook as the definitive guide to Harvard. Other academic disciplines may use different referencing standards and the handbooks produced by them should be treated as the definitive guides. Students will be advised about which referencing standards apply to their programmes of study. Students are required to keep an electronic copy of any text-based coursework until three months after receiving formal notification of the results. This may be requested by an academic member of staff for plagiarism detection purposes. Students shall keep all returned assessments until after the final assessment of the award and must re-submit any work to authorised staff if required.
- 12.10 Where students experience unexpected and exceptional difficulties in preparing for, or completing coursework, and have evidence for this, they may request an extension for coursework submission. In order to ensure consistency in application, a programme may identify one person to approve extensions, either for the programme overall or for each level of the programme. Extensions to deadlines for the submission of coursework may be approved by academic staff under the authority of the relevant Board of Examiners. An extension of a coursework submission deadline may not be given after the original submission date. Extensions should not be given where the revised date goes beyond the meeting of the Board of Examiners where the module would normally be considered.
- 12.11 Extensions of coursework submission deadlines may only be given where extenuating circumstances would be likely to be accepted by the University Extenuating Circumstances Panel as having adversely affected the student's preparation for, or performance in, assessment and are subject to evidential requirements.
- 12.12 Late submissions, whether measured against an original or formally extended deadline, shall be penalised. The penalty shall consist of a reduction in the mark of 10 percentage points for each whole or partial working day late. For the avoidance of doubt, this regulation means 10 percentage points of the marks available for the coursework and not ten per cent of the marks awarded to a student based on the merits of the coursework submitted. For example, where an assignment warranting a

merit mark of 68% is submitted one day late, then a mark of 58% shall be recorded. No mark less than zero shall result from the application of this regulation.

- 12.13 Any member of staff or other person appointed as an invigilator shall observe the rules for the invigilation of examinations published by the Registry.
- 12.14 Candidates shall observe the rules for the conduct of examinations published by the Registry.

13. Progression at the Taught Component Stage

- 13.1 A student may progress through all stages of taught component of the Professional Doctorate on condition that they have satisfactorily maintained their student status and shall only be finally assessed on the taught component on the basis of their performance at the Board of Examiners held on completion of all stages of the taught component.
- 13.2 The pass mark for a module shall be 50%. The module mark shall be calculated by taking into account the individual assessment component marks according to the prescribed weighting of the assessments.
- 13.3 The module mark shall be rounded to the nearest whole number. A module mark of 0.5 shall be rounded to the next higher whole number.
- 13.4 Where a module uses two or more elements of assessment, all elements shall be passed at a mark of at least 50% for the module to be passed. Compensation may be applied by Boards of Examiners, but normally only when a minimum of 40% has been achieved in each element, with an overall module mark of at least 50%.
- 13.5 Where necessary, the regulations of external bodies, such as professional bodies responsible for accrediting awards, may override these regulations.
- 13.6 Outcomes in relation to the taught components shall be communicated to the College Research Degrees Board. The College Research Degrees Board shall approve the submission by the candidate of an appropriate proposal of a doctoral research project.
- 13.7 The College Research Degrees Board may decide to withdraw a student from the Professional Doctorate programme if their doctoral research project proposal is inadequate and unlikely to lead to the outcomes specified under section 3. In such a case, the College Research Degrees Board shall determine whether the student is eligible for the conferment of an exit award.
- 13.8 Students shall be subject to the University's requirements in relation to satisfactory and timely progress in relation to both the taught and research component, and the programme as a whole.
- 13.9 The College Research Degrees Board shall be responsible for the progress monitoring of Professional Doctorate students and for the oversight of the procedures for managing unsatisfactory performance, in which it shall take into account information derived from the assessment of both that taught and research components as applicable.

14. Reassessment Opportunities for the Taught Component

- 14.1 Award Regulations provide the rights to retrieve failure in assessment for the taught component of the Professional Doctorate and the conditions under which such a failure may be retrieved.
- 14.2 Reassessment shall only be allowed as an attempt to retrieve an initial failure and shall not be allowed with a view to improving performance in any component of assessment, unless the University rules relating to extenuating circumstances apply.
- 14.3 Reassessment is a further attempt of any failed assessment component within a module that has been failed at a previous attempt. The full merit mark for the component shall be awarded but the maximum overall mark for such a module successfully passed following a reassessment is 50%, unless extenuating circumstances apply.
- 14.4 Students entering with advanced standing shall have the right to retrieve an initial failure by one reassessment of any module up to a maximum of 50% of the credits being studied.
- 14.5 A module passed on reassessment shall be awarded a mark of 50%.
- 14.6 University Regulations specify where, as a result of a Board of Examiners accepting that circumstances have adversely affected a student's performance, a failed module may be retaken as if for the first time and a mark higher than 50% obtained.
- 14.7 Boards of Examiners shall convene to determine students' resit entitlement up to a maximum of 120 credits. Students shall have the right to one reassessment per component in these credits. Reassessment shall normally take place following the meeting of the Board of Examiners.
- 14.8 The final Board of Examiners shall convene following completion of the reassessments. If the student has met the general pass standard for further progression this shall be reported to the College Research Degrees Board which shall confirm that student's entitlement to proceed to the research stage of the Professional Doctorate.
- 14.9 Where a student has exhausted all reassessment opportunities and has not met the general pass standard for further progression, they will be deemed to have failed and their enrolment on the programme terminated. The Board of Examiners may recommend that an alternative exit award be conferred where the requirements for such have been met.

Alternative Exit Awards

- 14.10 In the circumstances defined below, a student may obtain an exit award. A Board of Examiners may make such an award only at a point when a student's tenure on a programme of study has ceased. A student may receive only one award in respect of any programme of study.
- 14.11 A candidate who accepts a lower award rather than taking the opportunity to be reassessed may not normally elect to subsequently be reassessed.

- 14.12 Postgraduate Certificate: This may be awarded to a student who has successfully completed 60 credits of study on a postgraduate programme but has failed to complete or elected not to take an opportunity for reassessment.

Postgraduate Diploma: This may be awarded to a student who has successfully completed 120 credits of study on a postgraduate programme but has failed to complete or elected not to take an opportunity for reassessment.

Masters Degree: To be awarded a Masters degree, a student shall pass all the assessed elements constituting 180 credit points or where the student has achieved the pass standard in 150 credit points providing the mark of at least 40% is obtained in the remaining 30 credit points. Boards of Examiners shall convene to determine a student's entitlement to condonement. Condonement shall not be available to students who enter with advanced standing.

15. Annulment of Formal Assessments

- 15.1 In addition to the provisions for annulment arising from appeals against decisions of Boards of Examiners, Academic Board may annul an assessment in whole or in part if it is found that a serious irregularity has taken place in the conduct of the assessment, or if force majeure has prevented or seriously impaired the participation of a group of students in the assessment.

16. Assessment of the Research Component

- 16.1 Approval of the doctoral research project proposal is the responsibility of the College Research Degrees Board. Project proposals shall satisfy the College Research Degrees Board's requirements with regard to the registration of Professional Doctorate programmes, including the relevant research and ethics policies.
- 16.2 The scrutiny and approval of the project proposal shall normally take place prior to commencement of the research component, recognising that the development of the project proposal may typically be undertaken by the candidate in the context of the taught component.
- 16.3 Project proposals shall be approved on the basis of Doctor of Philosophy (Professional).
- 16.4 Where the research project is to be predicated on practice-based research, the thesis shall be replaced with a commentary of no more than 40,000 words which shall accompany the practice-based output.
- 16.5 Any student who is enrolled for the degree of PhD (Professional) and who is unable to complete the approved programme of research may, at any time prior to the submission of the thesis for examination, apply to the College Research Degrees Board to be enrolled as a candidate for an MPhil (Professional).
- 16.6 In the case of such transfer of enrolment, the latest date for completion shall be determined as follows. If the student is within twelve months (full-time) or eighteen months (part-time) of the original latest completion date, that date shall stand. If the student is more than twelve months (full-time) or eighteen

months (part-time) prior to the latest completion date that would have been applied had they been enrolled on the new programme of research from the outset, then that latest completion date shall be applied. Otherwise, a new latest completion date twelve months (full-time) or eighteen months (part-time) from the date of the College Research Degrees Board that approves the transfer shall apply.

The Thesis

- 16.7 The text of the thesis shall not exceed the following limits on length (excluding ancillary data);
- (a) 60,000 words for a PhD (Professional) or a 40,000 word commentary if the research is predicated on practice-based research
 - (b) 40,000 words for an MPhil (Professional) or a 20,000 word commentary if the research is predicated on practice-based research

17. Supervision

- 17.1 At the time of approval of the project proposal, the College Research Degrees Board shall approve the appointment of the student's supervisor(s) as recommended by the relevant Head of School. Supervisors shall have undertaken mandatory supervisory training and undertake on-going professional development through a recognised training programme in liaison with the Educational and Development Enhancement Unit.
- 17.2 Where appropriate, a team shall be appointed to supervise the student. The student's supervisory team shall consist of a minimum of two supervisors, at least one of whom shall have experience of supervising the relevant or higher research degree to completion. This would normally mean experience of supervision to PhD completion.
- 17.3 Where a team of supervisors is appointed, one supervisor shall be the Director of Studies (first supervisor) with responsibility for supervision of the student on a regular and frequent basis.
- 17.4 The College Research Degrees Board shall be notified of any proposals to change the supervisory arrangements for a programme of research and shall decide whether to approve such changes.
- 17.5 A student for a research degree of the University shall be ineligible to act as a Director of Studies for another research degree student but may act as a second supervisor or adviser.

18. Examination of the Research Thesis

- 18.1 The College Research Degrees Board is the Board of Examiners for the degrees of MPhil (Professional) and PhD (Professional).
- 18.2 The examination for the MPhil (Professional) and PhD (Professional) shall have two stages:
- (a) the submission and preliminary assessment of the thesis, and
 - (b) its defence by oral or approved alternative examination (see section 18.7)

- 18.3 Where a student is to be examined on approved work submitted in part fulfilment of the requirement for a thesis, the College Board of Examiners shall be satisfied that the examination arrangements are appropriate to allow an effective oral examination of the student. To this end, the College Board of Examiners shall direct, where it thinks fit, the additional arrangements to be made.
- 18.4 Full-time students shall submit their thesis for examination within three years of first registration for the degree or, exceptionally, by no later than the end of the fourth year of registration. No extension will be permitted.
- 18.5 Part-time students shall submit their thesis for examination within six years of first registration. No extension will be permitted.
- 18.6 The decision to present the thesis for examination is the sole responsibility of the student.
- 18.7 A student shall normally be examined orally on the thesis. The purpose of the oral examination is to confirm the preliminary assessment of the thesis. Where for reasons of sickness, disability or comparable valid cause the College Board of Examiners is satisfied that a student would be under serious disadvantage if required to undergo an oral examination, an alternative interactive examination may be approved. Such approval shall not be given on the grounds that the student's knowledge of the language in which the thesis is presented is inadequate.
- 18.8 The degree of MPhil (Professional) or PhD (Professional) may be awarded posthumously on the basis of a thesis completed by a student which is ready for submission for examination. In such cases the College Board of Examiners shall seek evidence that the student would have been likely to be successful had the oral examination taken place (see section 22 for further information).
- 18.9 An Independent Chair, appointed by the External Examiners' Committee, must be present at all oral examinations. Their role includes the following:
- (a) to attend the oral examination and ensure fairness in the way it is conducted;
 - (b) to ensure that the University's regulations are adhered to;
 - (c) to ensure that the outcome of the oral examination is appropriately communicated to both the student and the relevant entities in the University.
- 18.10 The Independent Chair is not expected to read the thesis, make any contribution to its evaluation at any stage or to contribute to the academic judgment on the outcome of the oral examination.
- 18.11 In any instance where the College Board of Examiners is made aware, by the Independent Chair, of a failure to comply with all the procedures of the examination process, it may annul the examination and direct such arrangements as it sees fit for the conduct of the examination.

18.12 The College Board of Examiners shall make a decision on the reports and recommendation of the Examiners in respect of the student.

19. Examiners

19.1 The Examiners shall be appointed by the External Examiners' Committee within six months prior to thesis submission or at the stage that the student applies for thesis pending status.

19.2 A student shall be examined by at least two and normally not more than three Examiners of whom at least one shall be an External Examiner. Staff candidates shall be examined by at least two External Examiners and one Internal Examiner.

19.3 An Internal Examiner shall be either:

(a) a member of staff of the University; or

(b) a member of staff of the student's Collaborating Establishment.

19.4 A person who has supervised the student or who has acted as an adviser to the student shall not be appointed as an Examiner.

19.5 Examiners shall be experienced in research in the general area of the student's thesis and, where practicable, have experience as a specialist in the topic(s) to be examined.

19.6 For MPhil (Professional) or PhD (Professional), at least one External Examiner shall have substantial experience (that is, normally three or more previous examinations as either an internal or external examiner) of examining research degree students at the appropriate level or above.

19.7 An External Examiner shall be independent both of the University and of the Collaborating Establishment and shall not have acted previously as the student's supervisor or adviser. An External Examiner shall normally not be a supervisor of another student. For MPhil (Professional) or PhD (Professional), the External Examiner shall not normally be an External Examiner on a taught course in the same department at the University. Former members of staff of the University shall not normally be approved as External Examiners until four years after the termination of their employment with the University.

19.8 For MPhil (Professional) or PhD (Professional), the External Examiners' Committee shall ensure that the same External Examiner is not approved so frequently that their familiarity with the department might prejudice objective judgment.

19.9 No student for a research degree shall act as an Examiner.

20. First Examination

20.1 Each Examiner shall read and examine the thesis and submit an independent preliminary report before any oral or alternative form of examination is held. In completing the preliminary report, each Examiner shall consider whether the thesis provisionally satisfies the requirements of the degree (set out in section

3) and where possible make an appropriate provisional recommendation subject to the outcome of any oral examination.

- 20.2 Following the oral examination the Examiners shall, where they are in agreement, submit a joint report and recommendation relating to the award of the degree to the College Board of Examiners. The preliminary reports and joint recommendation of the Examiners shall together provide sufficiently detailed comments on the scope and quality of the work to enable the College Board of Examiners to satisfy itself that the recommendation chosen in paragraph 20.3 is correct. The outcome of the taught component shall also be taken into consideration.

Where the Examiners are not in agreement, separate reports and recommendations shall be submitted.

- 20.3 Following the completion of the examination, the Examiners shall recommend to the College Board of Examiners that:

- (a) the student is awarded the degree; or
- (b) subject to minor amendments being made to the thesis, the student is awarded the degree (amendments to be completed within three months); or
- (c) subject to substantive amendments being made to the thesis, the student is awarded the degree (to be completed within six months); or
- (d) the student is given the opportunity, on one occasion, to be re-examined for the degree, with or without an oral examination (amendments and re-examination to take place within twelve months); or
- (e) the student is not awarded the degree submitted for and not permitted to be re-examined.
- (f) the student is awarded a lower degree reflecting the standard of work achieved; an MPhil (Professional) where the student submitted for a PhD (Professional).

- 20.4 Where the student has submitted for the degree of PhD (Professional) but has not attained the PhD (Professional) standard as cited in section 3, the Examiners may recommend that student is awarded the degree of MPhil (Professional) where they are satisfied that the MPhil standard, as cited in regulation 2.2.1 of the Research Degrees Regulations, has been met. This recommendation may be subject to minor amendments being made to the thesis.

- 20.5 In paragraph 20.3, the term 'minor amendment' includes amendments to grammar, typography, notation, number and format and the provision of minor clarifications. The number of such amendments or clarifications shall not affect their nature as minor amendments.

- 20.6 In paragraph 20.3, the term 'substantive amendment' refers to the need to correct, in an otherwise valid thesis, an error or a number of interconnected errors, in a central principle, technique or method. Where the existence of an error in a central principle, technique or method, or the cumulative effect of

such errors, brings the validity of the thesis into question, then the Examiners shall recommend either that the student should be re-examined or that the degree should not be awarded and there should not be an opportunity for re-examination.

- 20.7 Where the Examiners are agreed that subject to minor or substantive amendments to the thesis the student shall be awarded the degree, they shall notify the student in writing of the nature of the required amendments. It is a matter for the Examiners to decide whether such amendments are approved by the whole examining team or whether the responsibility is delegated to one member of the examining team. Confirmation of approval of the amendments shall be communicated informally to the student by the agreed member of the examining team within two months of their submission. The final decision shall rest with the College Board of Examiners.
- 20.8 Examiners may indicate informally their recommendation on the result of the examination to the student but they shall make it clear that the decision rests with the College Board of Examiners and that it also includes consideration of the outcome of the taught component.
- 20.9 Where the Examiners' recommendations are not unanimous, the College Board of Examiners may:
- (a) accept a majority recommendation (provided that the majority recommendation includes at least one External Examiner);
 - (b) accept the recommendation of the External Examiner; or
 - (c) require the appointment of an additional External Examiner.
- 20.10 Where an additional External Examiner is appointed under paragraph 20.9 (c) they shall prepare an independent preliminary report on the basis of the thesis and, if considered necessary, may conduct a further oral examination. That Examiner shall not be informed of the recommendations of the other Examiners. On receipt of the report from the additional Examiner the College Board of Examiners shall make its decision in accordance with paragraph 18.12.
- 20.11 Where the College Board of Examiners decides that the degree not be awarded and that no re-examination be permitted, the Examiners shall prepare an agreed statement of the deficiencies of the thesis and the reason for their recommendation, which shall be forwarded to the student by the College Board of Examiners.

21. Re-Examination

- 21.1 One re-examination may be permitted, subject to the following requirements:
- (a) a student who fails to satisfy the Examiners at the first examination, including where appropriate the oral or approved alternative examination (see paragraph 18.7), on the recommendation of the Examiners and with the approval of the College Board of Examiners, may be permitted to be re-examined;

- (b) the Examiners shall provide the student, through the College Board of Examiners, with written guidance on the deficiencies in the first examination; and
 - (c) the student shall submit for re-examination no earlier than 6 months and normally no longer than 18 months from the date of the latest part of the first examination. Where the College Board of Examiners has approved (under paragraph 18.7) an alternative to the oral examination the re-examination shall take place no earlier than 6 months and normally no longer than 18 months from the date of this approval. The College Board of Examiners may approve alterations to these periods.
- 21.2 The College Board of Examiners may require that an additional External Examiner be appointed for the re-examination.
- 21.3 There are four forms of re-examination:
- (a) where the student's performance in the first oral or approved alternative examination was satisfactory but the thesis was unsatisfactory, and the Examiners on re-examination find that the thesis as revised is satisfactory, the College Board of Examiners may exempt the student from further examination, oral or otherwise;
 - (b) where the student's performance in the first oral or approved alternative examination was unsatisfactory and the thesis was also unsatisfactory, any re-examination shall include a re-examination of the thesis and an oral or approved alternative examination;
 - (c) where on the first examination the thesis was so unsatisfactory that the College Board of Examiners abandoned the oral examination, any re-examination shall include a re-examination of the thesis and an oral or approved alternative examination;
 - (d) where on the first examination the thesis was deemed satisfactory but the performance in the oral and/or other examination was unsatisfactory, the Examiners shall recommend to the College Board of Examiners the form of re-examination, subject to time limits described in sub-paragraph 21.1(c).
- 21.4 In the case of a re-examination under sub-paragraph 21.1(a), (b), (c), or, where appropriate, (d), each Examiner shall read and examine the thesis and submit an independent preliminary report before any oral or alternative examination is held. In completing the preliminary report, each Examiner shall consider whether the thesis provisionally satisfies the requirements of the degree (as set out in section 3) and where possible make an appropriate provisional recommendation subject to the outcome of any oral examination.
- 21.5 Following the oral re-examination of the thesis under sub-paragraph 21.1(b), (c) or where appropriate, (d), the Examiners shall, where they are in agreement, submit a joint report and recommendation relating to the award of the degree. The preliminary reports and joint recommendation shall together provide sufficiently detailed comments to enable the College Board of Examiners to satisfy itself that the recommendation (see paragraph 21.6) is correct.

Where the Examiners are not in agreement, separate reports and recommendations shall be submitted.

- 21.6 Following the completion of the examination, the Examiners shall recommend to the College Board of Examiners that:
- (a) the student is awarded the degree; or
 - (b) subject to minor amendments being made to the thesis, the student is awarded the degree (amendments to be completed within three months); or
 - (c) subject to substantive amendments being made to the thesis, the student is awarded the degree (amendments to be completed within six months); or
 - (d) the student is not awarded the degree or
 - (e) the student is awarded a lower degree reflecting the standard of work achieved (an MPhil (Professional) for students who submitted for a PhD (Professional)).
- 21.7 Where the Examiners are agreed that subject to minor or substantive amendments to the thesis the student shall be awarded the degree, they shall inform the student in writing of the nature of the required amendments. It is a matter for the Examiners to decide whether such amendments are approved by the whole examining team or whether the responsibility is delegated to one member of the examining team.
- 21.8 Examiners may indicate informally their recommendation on the result of the examination to the student, but they shall make it clear that the decision rests with the College Board of Examiners and that it also includes consideration of the outcome of the taught component.
- 21.9 Where the Examiners' recommendations are not unanimous, the College Board of Examiners shall consider all reports and may require the appointment of an additional External Examiner.
- 21.10 Where an additional External Examiner is appointed under paragraph 20.9, they shall prepare an independent preliminary report on the basis of the thesis, and, if necessary, may conduct a further oral examination. The additional External Examiner shall not be informed of the recommendation of the other Examiners. The College Board of Examiners shall make a decision on the report and recommendation of the additional examiner.
- 21.11 Where the College Board of Examiners decides that the degree not be awarded, the Examiners shall prepare an agreed statement of the deficiencies of the thesis and the reason for their recommendation, which shall be forwarded to the student.

22. Aegrotat and Posthumous Awards

- 22.1 In a situation where a student's performance has been seriously adversely affected by ill health the University Regulations permit a Board of Examiners to make an Aegrotat award of the degree in question. For a postgraduate

research student, this would normally be made only in exceptional circumstances when a student is prevented from completing the award because of their medical condition.

- 22.2 A College Research Degrees Board should recommend conferment of such an award only in the following circumstances:
- (a) The student has given written permission to accept such an award
 - (b) The Board is assured that the student is unable, because of serious ill health, to complete their research work and thesis preparation in order to be assessed in the normal manner
 - (c) There is substantial and sufficient evidence available that the student has the ability and potential to achieve their chosen research degree award were it not for the extenuating circumstances
 - (d) There is significant evidence available in the form of a draft thesis or draft components of a thesis (or other documents or products of research) that the student would have been capable of producing a scholarly thesis of the required standard
 - (e) There is evidence available from the duration of registration and the quality of results achieved to date that the student has demonstrated a significant capacity to undertake original research and would in normal circumstances have been able to meet all the criteria for the award in question as specified in the award regulations.
- 22.3 Where it will not be possible for a thesis to be examined or a *viva voce* examination to be carried out, the College Research Degrees Boards shall recommend the appointment of examiners to the External Examiners' Committee. The Board should request the examiners to review the evidence available and to recommend whether an Aegrotat award is merited taking into account the student's special circumstances.
- 22.4 A research degree may be awarded posthumously to a candidate when a draft thesis has been produced but the final assessment has not taken place. The College Research Degrees Board shall recommend the appointment of examiners to the External Examiners' Committee to review the thesis material and assure themselves and the Board that the student would have been successful if it had been possible for the examination to take place in the normal manner.
- 23. Appeal against the Examination Decisions of the College Board of Examiners**
- 23.1 The current University Regulations on Academic Review and Appeals shall apply. See Part B of the University General Regulations.

Annex A – Submission of the Thesis

1. The student must submit two loose bound copies of the written thesis (or one for each Examiner where there is more than two Examiners) to the appropriate College Office for examination.
2. The thesis must be submitted in the following format. Fuller guidance can be located in the British Standards Specification BS 4821 (1990). Where these regulations differ in points of detail from BS 4821 the student may follow either.
 - (a) Except with permission from the College Research Degrees Board the thesis must be presented in English. Where the thesis is presented in a language other than English, a summary in English shall be included comprising up to 4,000 words.
 - (b) An abstract comprising no more than 500 words must be bound into the thesis which shall provide a synopsis of the thesis, the nature and scope of the work and the original contribution to knowledge.
 - (c) A loose copy of the abstract must be submitted with the thesis which includes the name of the author, the degree for which the thesis is submitted and the title of the thesis as a heading.
 - (d) Where the work has been part of a collaborative group project, the thesis must clearly indicate the student's individual contribution and the extent of the collaboration.
 - (e) Theses must be submitted in A4 format except with the permission of the College Research Degrees Board.
 - (f) Theses must be presented in a permanent and legible form in either typescript or print. The size and character in the main text shall not be less than 2mm for capitals and 1.5mm for x-height (i.e. the height of lower case x).
 - (g) The thesis must be printed on the recto side of the page only; the paper must be white and within the 70g/m² to 100g/m² range.
 - (h) Where the use of coloured maps, diagrams or other illustrative material is integral to the comprehension of the argument, these must be reproduced in colour in the thesis.
 - (i) The margin at the left hand binding edge of the page must be not less than 40mm; other margins must be not less than 15mm.
 - (j) Double or one-and-a-half spacing must be used in the typescript except for indented quotations or footnotes where single spacing may be used.
 - (k) Pages must be numbered consecutively through the main text including photographs and/or diagrams included as whole pages.
 - (l) The main title page must provide the following information:

- a. The full title of the thesis
- b. The full name of the author
- c. The award for which the thesis is submitted
- d. The collaborating establishment (if any)
- e. The month and year of submission

Submission of the Final Thesis

3. After successful examination (or after satisfactory completion of required amendments) a candidate for a research degree must provide a permanently bound final version of the thesis together with an electronic copy.
4. Electronic copies will be published on the University's repository site.
5. Any copies of the thesis (bound or electronic) submitted to the University remain the property of the University.

Confidentiality of the Thesis

6. Exceptionally, the College Research Degrees Board may agree that a thesis should remain confidential for a period of time on the written request of the student (which must accompany the thesis at the time of submission). The period of time shall not normally exceed two years.
7. Where a College Research Degrees Board has agreed that a thesis may remain confidential the thesis, immediately on submission, shall only be made available to those directly involved in the supervision of the student or the examination process. This includes the examiners and members of the College Research Degrees Board or College Board of Examiners.
8. On completion of the examination process, the final copies of the thesis (see 3 above) shall be held by the College Office and only released to the relevant libraries at the end of the period of confidentiality approved by the College Research Degrees Board.

Annex B – Extenuating Circumstances: Additional Information

1. Responsibilities of Students

- (a) It is the responsibility of the student to attend examinations, submit coursework for assessment as required and by the due date, and to provide the University Extenuating Circumstances Panel, in advance of its meeting, with relevant evidence where exceptional and unforeseen circumstances may have adversely affected their performance in assessments
- (b) If a student claims that their performance has been adversely affected by extenuating circumstances, and submits an application for these circumstances to be taken into account, it is their responsibility to ensure that the evidence of such extenuating circumstances is provided, documented and independently substantiated, at the earliest possible opportunity.
- (c) Students wishing to claim extenuating circumstances will be required to complete the online process.
- (d) If a student wishes to submit an application for extenuating circumstances, they are strongly advised to talk this through with an appropriate member of staff (e.g. academic tutor), in the first instance.
- (f) Individual students are responsible for ensuring that applications for Extenuating Circumstances to be taken into account are submitted prior to the meeting of the Board of Examiners where the relevant assessments would normally be considered.
- (g) Applications can be withdrawn by the student at any time up until the meeting of the University Extenuating Circumstances Panel.

2. Extenuating Circumstances which Adversely Affect Performance in Assessment

The following are examples of circumstances that may be treated as adversely affecting a student's performance in assessment. This list is not exhaustive.

- (a) Illness affecting attendance at teaching or assessment;
- (b) Illness affecting preparation for or of an assessment;
- (c) Being the victim of a crime involving injury;
- (d) Circumstances of a serious personal or emotional nature;
- (e) Force majeure or other unpreventable event.

3. University Extenuating Circumstances Panel

- 3.1 A student's claim for extenuating circumstances in assessment shall be considered by the University Extenuating Circumstances Panel having regard to the following:
 - (a) The authenticity of evidence produced: is the evidence documented and verified by an independent and authoritative person not personally connected to the student e.g. a doctor, counsellor, police officer, etc?
 - (b) The contemporaneity of the evidence: is the evidence up to date and relevant to the assessment claimed to have been affected.

Disability or Long Term Illness

- 3.2 Where the claim relates to a long-term illness or disability that would be defined as a disability under the Equality Act (2010)¹, and which may be more appropriately treated as requiring special support, the University Extenuating Circumstances Panel should establish whether the circumstances were known to the student and the University at the time of admission or enrolment.
- (a) Where a long-term illness or disability was not present, or not known to the student, at the time of enrolment, the circumstances may be dealt with by the Extenuating Circumstances Panel for those assessments being undertaken during the current period of enrolment. Future assessments shall be dealt with in accordance with University practice for the support of students with a disability or long-term illness and students should contact the Disability Service for further advice. Unless there is good reason for non-disclosure of the circumstances at an earlier time the Extenuating Circumstances Panel shall not consider assessments undertaken in previous enrolment periods.
- (b) Where a long-term illness or disability was present and known to the student at the time of enrolment, but the student did not disclose this to the University, these circumstances shall not normally, unless there was good reason for non-disclosure, be considered as grounds for consideration by the Extenuating Circumstances Panel.
- (c) Where a long-term illness or disability was present and made known to the University at the time of admission or enrolment a needs assessment identifying additional support requirements will be undertaken. The disability or long-term illness shall not be considered as an Extenuating Circumstance where a needs assessment has been provided by the University's Disability Service.

4. Boards of Examiners

- 4.1 Where it is deemed that circumstances have occurred which could have adversely affected the student's performance, the University Extenuating Circumstances Panel shall forward these to the relevant Board of Examiners or, where appropriate, to the relevant Fitness to Practise Panel.

The Board of Examiners shall consider whether, on the basis of the assessment profile, it is reasonable to conclude that the circumstances have actually affected performance.

- 4.2 Normally no student shall be eligible for an award or progression until such time as the Board of Examiners has sufficient evidence to satisfy itself that the student has achieved the appropriate standard for the award or progression. Extenuating circumstances can never compensate for insufficient evidence,

¹ In the Act, a person has a disability if, they have a physical or mental impairment; the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to perform normal day-to-day activities.

For the purposes of the Act, these words have the following meanings: 'substantial' means more than minor or trivial 'long-term' means that the effect of the impairment has lasted or is likely to last for at least twelve months (there are special rules covering recurring or fluctuating conditions).

provided through assessment, of achievement of the standard for an award or progression.

5. Outcomes

- 5.1 Where a student's performance is found to have been adversely affected by circumstances, the Board of Examiners shall apply the following:

For the Taught Component

- (a) The student shall either be allowed to take the assessment(s) concerned as if for the first time (or as if for the second time if the assessment affected by the extenuation is a reassessment) in a manner approved by the Board of Examiners; or
- (b) Where there is sufficient evidence on which to base its decision, the Board of Examiners may deem the student to have passed the assessment(s) concerned. In determining assessment marks to be awarded where a student's extenuation has adversely affected their performance the Board of Examiners shall assign such marks as reflect the ability of the student as evidenced by other assessments. An exit award may be conferred as appropriate.

For the Research Component

- (c) The student shall be allowed extra time in which to complete their thesis or make amendments following initial examination. The College Research Degrees Board shall decide upon the length of time permitted, taking into account the extent of the circumstances, agreeing an extension to the period of registration where required.
- (d) Where extenuating circumstances arise during the *viva voce* examination, such as unexpected illness, and the examination is adversely affected, the student shall be allowed to be examined or re-examined, as if for the first time. Where extenuating circumstances arise prior to the *viva voce* starting, it should be rescheduled, preferably giving at least 24 hours notice to avoid unnecessary disruption of travel arrangements for external examiners.