



# SPECIALIST DOCTORATE REGULATIONS 2025/26

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# Specialist Doctorate Regulations 2025/26

*These regulations should be read in conjunction with the Research Degree Regulations, Regulations on the Conduct of Assessment, Regulations on Academic Misconduct and Fitness to Practise Policy and Procedures*

## Contents

1.	Admission.....	2
2.	Period of study and structure of course .....	3
3.	Registration with the University.....	3
4.	Annual Enrolment .....	4
5.	Interruption of Studies .....	4
6.	Change of Degree course .....	5
7.	Reviews of Academic Progress or Formal Progression Reviews .....	5
8.	Discontinuation of registration.....	5
9.	Supervision of the Research Component .....	6
10.	Requirements and Submission of the Thesis.....	6
11.	Conduct of the Final Examination .....	8
12.	Academic Misconduct.....	10
13.	External Examiners .....	10
14.	Assessments .....	11
15.	Academic Appeals.....	11
16.	Appeals against the discontinuation of registration.....	15

# 1. Admission

- (1) To be eligible for admission to a Specialist Doctorate, an applicant must:
  - (a) be at least 16 years of age on the start date of the course of study;
  - (b) satisfy or be exempted from the General Entrance Requirements set out in the University Coursefinder and from any additional entrance requirements which may be prescribed for individual courses of study;
  - (c) meet any employment requirements accompanying the specialist doctorate;
  - (d) be able to demonstrate proficiency in spoken and written English to the satisfaction of the University before commencing the course of study.
- (2) Applicants to the DClinPsy must meet the Admissions qualifications as set out on the Coursefinder.
- (3) An applicant will only be admitted to a course of study which the University has judged to be sufficiently different from any studies that the applicant has previously undertaken, whether at the University or elsewhere except where such studies are to be counted as part of the applicant's course of study at the University under the provisions of exemptions in paragraph 6;
- (4) Applicants will be asked to give details of any disability or Specific Learning Difficulty so that the University and/or employer can advise them provisionally on the level of support available. Information provided for this purpose will play no part in assessing an application for admission to the University.
- (5) Applicants for admission to a specialist doctorate leading to the award of a professional qualification and/or registration with a professional body are required to meet all pre-employment requirements and declare unspent and spent convictions, including criminal convictions. Failure to disclose this information before or during the course may lead to disciplinary action and could lead to the termination of employment and registration with the university. The decision on whether to accept an applicant will be based both on academic requirements and the risk posed to students, staff and service users.
- (6) Recognition of prior learning for the taught elements may be considered on a specialist doctorate except for the Doctorate in Clinical Psychology where recognition of prior learning will not be accepted.
- (7) A contract is formed between the University and the applicant as soon as the offer of admission to the University has been accepted. In the case of collaborative arrangements, there may also be a contract between the partner institution and the applicant. Applicants to the DClinPsy are also required to sign a contract of employment with the NHS to confirm their university place. Acceptance of an offer of a University place is expressly subject to the terms of these contracts, which include the requirement that students will comply with the conditions of enrolment with the University.
- (8) An applicant will normally be expected to start their course of study at the start of the academic year. Applicants for the DClinPsy are required to start their academic course of study at the beginning of the academic year.

## 2. Period of study and structure of course

- (1) A specialist doctorate will contain the following components:
  - (a) A formally taught component appropriate to support the course's academic objectives;
  - (b) A practical/work-related/professional component;
  - (c) A substantial research component at FHEQ Level 8, of a nature appropriate to the discipline concerned, on which the final examination contributing to the award of the degree will be based. The results of the research shall be presented in the form of a thesis.
- (2) The final examination shall include an oral examination of each candidate conducted by at least two examiners, one of whom shall be external to the University.
- (3) The course leading to the award of the DClinPsy will include elements of a practical, vocational and professional nature as well as formally taught elements, all with required assessments outlined in the Course Specification, and will include a substantial research element at FHEQ level 8 which is of a nature appropriate to the discipline and is presented in the form of a thesis.
- (4) The length of a full-time specialist doctorate course is normally three years. The maximum period of registration is normally 5 years, however, this may vary where a student is in receipt of NHS funding and/or employment. The requirements of the funding body will take precedence when determining the maximum period of registration.
- (5) Students should refer to the individual course specification for any permitted arrangements for part-time study.
- (6) Transfers between degree courses are not normally permitted, except if procedures for transfer are specifically described in the individual course specification.

## 3. Registration with the University

- (1) To be eligible for registration as a student of the University, an applicant must have applied for and been formally offered admission, and have satisfied the academic and other conditions for admission.
- (2) No student may normally register concurrently for more than one course of study at the University unless special provision is made for this in the regulations for the individual courses of study.
- (3) Students who register with the University retain their registration status until they graduate, withdraw permanently, or have their registration discontinued by the University. Students are required to give notice in writing to the Executive Director of Student Journey (or nominee) via [the University's withdrawal process](#) before withdrawing. In cases of collaborative provision students are also required to give notice in writing to the partner institution.

## 4. Annual Enrolment

- (1) Students who have not interrupted their studies under the provisions of Section 5 of these regulations must enrol for each year of their studies by:
  - (a) completing the Online Sign-Up process;
  - (b) paying, or making arrangements acceptable to the University to pay, the tuition fees and any outstanding debts, as outlined in the Fees Regulations;
  - (c) providing relevant documentation to verify their identity and the right to study in the UK at the outset of the course and, where required, during their studies.
- (2) It is a condition of enrolment that students agree to abide by and submit to the University Statutes, Regulations and Rules, as made and amended from time to time by the Academic Board and Council.
- (3) Enrolment gives students the right to attend classes, receive tuition or supervision and have access to relevant University facilities.
- (4) Where the student's doctoral studies are accompanied by an employment contract, they will be required to fulfil the terms, hours and reporting stipulated in that contract. Any additional employment beyond this would need approval from the employer and would need to meet any visa sponsorship requirements.

## 5. Interruption of Studies

- (1) The period of study shall normally be continuous.
- (2) The Director of Postgraduate Research or their nominee may permit a student to interrupt their studies for up to 24 months on financial, medical or personal grounds on the recommendation of the student's Executive Dean of School or an authorised deputy.
- (3) Students registered on the Doctorate in Clinical Psychology will normally be required to resume their studies following a period of interruption at the start of the academic year.
- (4) A student may only interrupt their studies for more than 24 months, whether consecutively or otherwise, with the permission of the Chair of the Doctoral School Committee or their nominee.
- (5) Students who have interrupted their studies remain registered students of the University and subject to University regulations, do not have the right to attend classes, use University facilities, or receive tuition or supervision other than occasional access to tutors by arrangement. Exceptions to this may be made to support recovery in cases of interruptions due to mental health and wellbeing or maternity/paternity/adoption leave.
- (6) Registration periods for international students may be restricted by visa regulations.

For students on the Doctorate in Clinical Psychology only:

- (7) Circumstances can arise occasionally that mean a trainee will need to extend their DClinPsy training period beyond the standard three years of registration. Examples include failing and having to resit a placement, extended periods of illness or maternity leave. This may lead to an extension of the NHS employment contract and will require an Interruption of Studies from the Doctoral School. This allows the trainee an extended period to be absent from the University. Students should refer to the General Course Handbook for detailed information about eligibility, process and procedures.

## **6. Change of Degree course**

- (1) Students are not normally permitted to change degree course when studying on a specialist doctorate.

## **7. Reviews of Academic Progress or Formal Progression Reviews**

- (1) Formal academic progression is based on a student's academic progress and is confirmed on an annual basis at the examination board.

## **8. Discontinuation of registration**

- (1) Where it becomes clear that a student will not meet the academic or other specific progression requirements, or if a student fails to fulfil taught attendance requirements for the Specialist Doctorate course, the examination board may require a student to discontinue their study during the academic session.

- (2) In addition, the following provision applies to students on the Doctorate in Clinical Psychology:

Any trainee whose contract is terminated by the Employer will have their registration with the University discontinued, and similarly discontinuation of registration with the University will automatically result in termination of the employment contract. The formal warning process does not apply in these scenarios.

- (3) If a student is deemed unfit for professional practice under the Royal Holloway [Fitness to Practise](#) policy and procedures for courses that lead to a professional qualification in a health care discipline, their registration may be discontinued or interrupted.
- (4) Where a student's record of attendance, academic performance or progress is unsatisfactory, the Executive Dean or nominee may recommend to the Associate Pro Vice Chancellor (Postgraduate Research) or nominee that the student's registration should be discontinued. If the Executive Dean or nominee is a member of the student's supervisory team, it may be appropriate for a different member of staff to be involved in making such a recommendation and in monitoring the student's progress.

For students holding a Student Route Visa, the University has obligations placed on it to report non-attendance to UK Visas and Immigration and may discontinue registration without following the formal warning process.

- (5) Before making a recommendation to the Associate Pro Vice Chancellor (Postgraduate Research) or nominee that a student's registration should be discontinued, Student Administration (inclusive of the Doctoral School), will issue the student with two formal warnings on behalf of the Executive Dean or nominee. Each formal warning shall state the reason(s) for the warning, the nature of any requirement made of the student in order to demonstrate improvement and the period of time within which this is to be done in order for the student to avoid their registration being discontinued. The second letter of formal warning shall state the fact that it is the final warning.
- (6) Normally four weeks will elapse between the first and second formal warnings to give adequate time for the student to demonstrate a satisfactory level of improvement.
- (7) At each warning the student will be offered the opportunity to submit a written response and/or to meet with the Executive Dean or nominee to discuss the grounds for the warning. The student may be accompanied at the meeting by another student or member of staff of the University. On provision of satisfactory and adequately documented explanation for the student's record of attendance, academic performance or progress Student Administration may set the warning aside. This decision will be confirmed to the student in writing. Formal warnings which have not been set aside will remain active for the duration of the student's course of study, including any course transfers.
- (8) If after the second letter of formal warning there is insufficient improvement, the Executive Dean or nominee may recommend that the student's registration should be discontinued. Student Administration will present the case to the Associate Pro Vice Chancellor (Postgraduate Research) or nominee, who will make a final decision based on the circumstances.
- (9) The Executive Director of Student Journey or nominee will write to each student whose registration has been discontinued informing them of the decision with reasons, of the right to appeal and the appeals procedure.
- (10) For students on the Doctorate in Clinical Psychology, it might be more appropriate to follow the absence employment policy to resolve absence issues.

## **9. Supervision of the Research Component**

- (1) Supervisory arrangements are set out in the Code of Practice for Research Degree Students and Supervisors.

## **10. Requirements and Submission of the Thesis**

- (1) The thesis shall:
  - (a) consist of the candidate's own account of their investigations, indicating in what respects they advance the study of the subject;

- (b) form a distinct contribution to the knowledge of the subject and afford evidence of originality shown by the discovery of new facts and/or the exercise of independent critical power;
  - (c) be appropriate to the subject concerned, having regard to the other formally assessed elements for the degree;
  - (d) be a minimum of 25,000 words in length. The word count includes references, footnotes and endnotes, but exclude the bibliography and any appendices, which should only include material which the examiners are not required to read in order adequately to examine the thesis, but to which they may refer if they wish;
  - (e) be written in English to a satisfactory standard of literary presentation;
- (2) An electronic copy of the thesis must be submitted by the student to the Doctoral School, except in cases where agreement is in place for a restriction of access for reasons of confidentiality, commercial sensitivity or patents where, instead, two hard copies of the thesis must be submitted by the student to the Doctoral School. In such cases, the student may be required to submit a third copy of the thesis in the event that a third examiner is appointed at any stage in the examination process. All components of the thesis must be presented for examination in a final form and in the case of hard copies bound in accordance with the [Instructions and Notes on Submission](#).
- (3) Failure to submit by the submission deadline will normally result in the student failing the degree without the option to present the thesis for a second time, unless there are severe extenuating circumstances which are deemed acceptable by the Doctoral School Committee.
- (4) A candidate may not submit a thesis which has already been submitted for a degree or comparable award of the University or another institution. Work which has already been submitted in this way may, however, be incorporated in a thesis covering a wider field, provided this is indicated on the examination entry form and in the thesis itself.
- (5) A candidate may submit the results of work done in conjunction with the supervisor or with other researchers, provided the personal share in the investigation is clearly stated and certified by the supervisor.
- (6) Published work may be included only if it forms an integral part of the thesis and makes a relevant contribution to the main theme of the thesis. A series of publications alone is not acceptable as a thesis. The personal share in publications in joint names must be clearly stated and certified by the supervisor.
- (7) A candidate may submit as supplementary material in support of their candidature any published contribution to the advancement of the subject. Such material should normally be bound in at the end of the thesis in its published form, with appropriate references made in the body of the thesis. The personal share in publications in joint names must be clearly stated and certified by the supervisor.
- (8) Where documentary evidence of commercial funding and/or commercial sensitivity is provided, restriction of access to the electronic version of the thesis for a period longer than two, with a maximum of five, years can be specified by the student at the



point of submission. This request must be approved by the supervisor(s). Students or supervisors requesting access restrictions for any period longer than five years must submit a formal written request to the Doctoral School. This can be submitted at the time of the student's entry for the examination, or, within eighteen months following the successful viva and must be supported in writing by the student's supervisor(s) or Executive Dean of the School, if the supervisor has left the University. The request will be considered by the School's Director of Postgraduate Research Education.

- (9) The student shall be notified in writing of the decision of the School's Director of Postgraduate Research Education, the reasons for the decision and, if appropriate, the right to appeal against the decision by writing to the School's Director of Postgraduate Research Education within two weeks of notification.

## **11. Conduct of the Final Examination**

- (1) A candidate must satisfy the examiners in all other course requirements to date before submitting the thesis for examination.
- (2) Examiners for the thesis will be appointed by the Doctoral School Committee, in accordance with section 13.
- (3) After reading the thesis, the examiners will:
  - (a) Prepare independent written reports on the thesis prior to the oral examination;
  - (b) Examine the candidate orally. This normally takes place with only themselves and the candidate however, one member of the supervisory team may attend the oral examination as an observer;
  - (c) Make an audio recording of the oral examination. The recording will be kept by the Doctoral School for a period of 6 months from either the date the student is awarded or the date their studies are discontinued, after which time the recording will be destroyed. The recording will only be listened to in the event of an academic appeal or complaint, and only by those involved with investigating the appeal or complaint. The examiners may examine the candidate in addition by written and/or practical assessments on subjects relevant to the thesis.
- (4) The following options are available to the examiners in determining the result of the final examination:
  - (a) If the thesis fulfils the criteria in section 10 and the candidate satisfies the examiners in all other parts of the examination, the examiners will report that the candidate has satisfied them in the examination for the degree.
  - (b) If the thesis otherwise fulfils the criteria in section 10 but requires minor amendments and if the candidate satisfies the examiners in all other parts of the examination, the examiners may require the candidate to make amendments specified by them within three months. The amended thesis shall be submitted to the examiners, or to one of their number nominated by them, for confirmation that the amendments are satisfactory.

- (c) If the thesis, though inadequate with respect of fulfilling the criteria in section 10, shall seem of sufficient merit to justify such action, the examiners may determine that the candidate be permitted to re-present the thesis in a revised form within nine months. The amended thesis shall be submitted to the examiners, or to one of their number nominated by them, for confirmation that the amendments are satisfactory, without the requirement to conduct a further viva.
  - (d) If the thesis is adequate, but the candidate fails to satisfy the examiners at the oral examination, the examiners may determine that the candidate be permitted to represent the same thesis and submit to a further oral examination within a period specified by them and not exceeding 18 months.
  - (e) The examiners may determine that the candidate has not satisfied them in the examination and that the degree should not be awarded. The examiners shall not, however, save in very exceptional circumstances, make such a decision without submitting the candidate to an oral examination.
- (5) If the examiners are unable to reach agreement, their reports shall be referred to the Chair of the Doctoral School Committee, who shall determine the action to be taken. This will normally involve the appointment of an independent third or fourth examiner who will be external to the University and those institutions in which the original examiners are members of staff.
- (6) In all cases where the outcome requires re-submission of the thesis and/or a further form of examination students must submit the thesis by the deadline and/or undertake the examination on the date(s) set. Failure to do so will normally result in the student failing the degree, unless there are severe extenuating circumstances which are deemed acceptable by the Doctoral School Committee.
- (7) The examiners for the thesis shall provide a detailed and reasoned statement of their judgement of the candidate's performance and for the decision they have reached, and this report shall be made available to the candidate for their personal information.
- (8) Students with any disability or Specific Learning Difficulty may ask for reasonable adjustments to be made to the conduct of the final examination under the provisions of the Regulations on Access Arrangements for Assessment. Such requests should be submitted to the Doctoral School at the time of the student's formal entry or re-entry to the final examination where possible and no later than two weeks before the date of the oral examination.
- (9) Where a student feels that their academic performance on the date of the oral examination may be substantially affected by unexpected medical or other personal circumstances, the student should inform the examiners of their situation no later than the start of the oral examination so that they can make a decision on whether or not to proceed. The examiners may require the student to submit evidence of their condition to the Doctoral School within seven days.

- (10) Where a student fails to attend the oral examination, this will normally result in the student failing the degree unless there are severe extenuating circumstances which are deemed acceptable by the Doctoral School Committee.
- (11) The degree shall not be awarded until one electronic copy of the final, post-viva, corrected version of the thesis has been submitted to the institutional repository and lodged with the Doctoral School.

## 12. Academic Misconduct

- (1) Cases of academic misconduct will be investigated in accordance with the [Regulations on Academic Misconduct](#).

## 13. External Examiners

- (1) The provisions of Section 8 External Examiners in the Regulations on the Conduct of Assessment shall apply except that a specialist doctorate course may also appoint a Lead External Examiner to oversee the course.
- (2) A Lead External examiner is appointed to support assessment and quality review of the Programme overall. This appointment is for a two-year term in the final two years of their general EE appointment. Additional duties will include:
- (a) Review of any significant curriculum or assessment changes
  - (b) Approval of clinical examination paper in advance of the examination
  - (c) Independent consultation regarding any issues of student progression, fitness to practise or course failure
  - (d) Independent consultation regarding any issues of concern regarding usual course delivery
  - (e) Complete an annual report.
- (3) External Examiners appointed for the final examination of the thesis will be appointed by the Doctoral School Committee, which will ensure that:
- (a) The examiners are expert in the field of the thesis and able to make an independent assessment of the student;
  - (b) At least one of the examiners is external to Royal Holloway when the nomination is made, meaning that they must not have been a member of staff of Royal Holloway for a period of at least three years;
  - (c) One examiner will normally be a member of staff, a visiting lecturer, a visiting professor or emeritus professor at Royal Holloway when the nomination is made or will have held such a position within the last three years. If no suitable individual is available from the University, a second examiner who is part of the

University of London may be appointed. Following provision of reasonable justification

- (d) Are not a staff member of an institution for which a member of staff of the University is appointed to act as an External Examiner for comparable courses i.e a reciprocal lead examiner arrangement cannot be permitted for examination of the thesis.

## 14. Assessments

- (1) The individual course specification will set out the range of assessments which need to be passed to fulfil the requirements for the taught and practical components.
- (2) Students shall be deemed to have failed an assessed component because of late submission if they:
  - (a) Submit the assessed component after the specified deadline without an approved extension, or
  - (b) Submit the assessed component after the end of an approved extension period.
- (3) In the absence of acceptable extenuating cause, students shall be given one opportunity to re-submit an assessed component which fails to achieve a pass outcome or which is deemed to have failed owing to non-submission or late submission.
- (4) Students who receive an overall outcome of Fail on a piece of assessment on the first attempt will normally be permitted to resit the assessment at the next available opportunity, which at the discretion of the exam board, will be on a rolling basis throughout the academic year to facilitate progression on the course.
- (5) Where necessary students may apply for extenuating circumstances. In the event of a successful application students may be granted an extension, uncapped resit, exceptional third attempt or deferral as determined by the Board of Examiners.
- (6) Students who submit an assessed component which achieves a pass mark shall not be given the opportunity to re-submit this regardless of any mitigating circumstances that may have affected their academic performance.
- (7) Any work may not be marked beyond the upper limit set. The upper limit may be a word limit in the case of written work or a time limit in the case of assessments such as oral work, presentations, films, or performance. In the case of presentations, films, or performance these may be stopped once they exceed the upper time limit.
- (8) Opportunities for retaking placements will be set out in the course specification.

## 15. Academic Appeals

- (1) Students may appeal against:
- (a) Outcomes of the Board of Examiners;
  - (b) A refusal to examine an incomplete thesis;
  - (c) The outcome of the final examination.
- (2) The University's academic appeals process includes a formal and a review stage.

### **Formal Stage**

- (3) A student may appeal only on one or more of the following grounds:
- (a) That the student's performance in the assessment was substantially affected by circumstances of which the examiners had not been made aware and which the student could not with reasonable diligence have disclosed before the outcome had been determined;
  - (b) That there were procedural irregularities in the conduct of the assessment, or administrative errors, which might cause reasonable doubt as to whether the outcome would have been the same if the irregularities or errors had not occurred;
  - (c) That there is evidence of bias on the part of one or more of the examiners such that the outcome should not be allowed to stand.
- (4) A student cannot appeal against academic judgement which includes, but is not limited to, marks awarded for assessed work, clinical competence assessments by a placement clinical supervisor and outcomes of extenuating circumstances decisions.
- (5) must be submitted in writing by the student to the University within 15 working days of the date on which the student was formally notified of the outcome of the Board of Examiners or the Doctoral School Committee.
- (6) The Executive Director of the Student Journey Division or their nominee may reject or dismiss any appeal which in their opinion:
- (a) Is not submitted by the deadline given in paragraph (4) above, without compelling reason for the delay;
  - (b) Does not fall within the remit of these regulations;
  - (c) Challenges academic judgement;
  - (d) Fails to present reasonable grounds;
  - (e) Fails to provide sufficient information or evidence in support of the student's claims;
  - (f) Is frivolous or malicious. In such cases, the student may be liable for disciplinary action under the Student Conduct Regulations.

- (7) If the appeal is dismissed, a Completion of Procedures letter will be issued confirming that the internal appeals procedure of the University has been completed and the student's right to request that the University's decision be reviewed by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education.
- (8) Appeals which are not dismissed will be investigated by an investigating officer and the student will be notified of one of the following outcomes of the formal stage, together with reasons for the decision:
- (a) the appeal is not upheld, and the original outcome shall stand;
  - (b) the appeal is upheld, and the original examiners will be asked to reconsider their decision, the outcome of which shall be final;
  - (c) the appeal is upheld, the original outcome will be set aside, and arrangements made for another assessment to be conducted, the outcome of which shall be final. The investigating officer in consultation with the Executive Director of Student Journey, or their nominee, may make stipulations about the conduct of the assessment.
- (9) The student will also be notified of their right to request a review of the decision, and the deadline to do so.

### **Review stage**

- (10) Following completion of the formal stage, the student may request a review of the decision. The review will be carried out by the Head of Legal Services or their nominee.
- (11) A review request must be submitted in writing to the University within 10 working days of the date on which the student was formally notified of the outcome at the formal stage.
- (12) A review of the appeal decision may be requested only on one or more of the following grounds:
- (a) Fresh evidence can be presented which could not with reasonable diligence have been submitted with the initial appeal and which might cause reasonable doubt as to the fairness of that decision;
  - (b) There is evidence of a failure to follow the procedures set out in these regulations which might cause reasonable doubt as to the fairness of the decision;
  - (c) The decision was perverse given the evidence which was available at the time.

Consideration of an appeal at the formal stage must have been completed before a student can request a review.

- (13) The Head of Legal Services or their nominee may reject or dismiss any request for review which in their opinion:

- (a) is not submitted by the deadline given in paragraph (9) above, without compelling reason for the delay;
  - (b) does not fall within the remit of these regulations;
  - (c) challenges academic judgement
  - (d) fails to present reasonable grounds;
  - (e) fails to provide sufficient evidence in support of the student's claims;
  - (f) is frivolous or malicious. In such cases, the student may be liable for disciplinary action under the Student Conduct Regulations.
- (14) The review request will be considered by the Head of Legal Services or their nominee, who has not been involved in the investigation at the formal stage of the appeals process, and they will determine one of the following courses of action:
- (a) dismiss the request for a review in which case the outcome of the formal stage shall stand;
  - (b) refer the matter back to the formal stage for reconsideration;
  - (c) refer the case to a Review Panel for consideration.
- (15) If a Review Panel is required, the student will be informed of the arrangements and an Officer from Legal Services will act as Secretary to the Panel. The Review Panel will comprise of:
- (a) A Pro-Vice Chancellor, who has not considered the appeal, or their nominee, as Chair;
  - (b) Two members of academic staff, normally one of the School Directors of Education and a Chair or Deputy Chair of a Department Assessment Board, both from the School in which the student is studying;
  - (c) The Head of the Academic Quality and Policy Office or their nominee.
- Where the review relates to the final thesis examination, both members of academic staff referred to in paragraph (b) above will have experience of doctoral supervision to completion.
- (16) The Review Panel will decide on one of the following outcomes.
- (a) reject the request for review, in which case the outcome of the formal stage shall stand;
  - (b) the original examiners will be asked to reconsider their decision, the outcome of which shall be final;
  - (c) the original outcome will be set aside, and arrangements made for another assessment to be conducted, the outcome of which shall be final. The Review Panel may make stipulations about the conduct of the assessment.

- (17) The Head of Legal Services or their nominee will issue a Completion of Procedures letter informing the student of their decision or the decision of the Review Panel. The letter will explain the reasons for the decision and the student's right to request that the decision be reviewed by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education.

## **16. Appeals against the discontinuation of registration**

- (1) A student may appeal against a decision to discontinue their registration on one or both of the following grounds:
- (a) that there is evidence of a failure to follow the procedures set out in Section 8 which might cause reasonable doubt as to the fairness of the decision to discontinue the student's registration;
  - (b) that fresh evidence can be presented which the student could not with reasonable diligence have disclosed before the decision to discontinue their registration was made and which might cause reasonable doubt as to the fairness of that decision.
- (2) Appeals must be submitted in writing by the student to the University within 15 working days of the date on which the student was formally notified of the decision to discontinue their registration.
- (3) The Executive Director of the Student Journey Division or their nominee may dismiss any appeal which in their opinion:
- (a) is not submitted by the deadline given in paragraph (2) above without compelling reason for the delay;
  - (b) does not fall within the remit of these regulations;
  - (c) fails to present reasonable grounds;
  - (d) fails to provide sufficient information or evidence in support of the student's claims.
  - (e) is frivolous or malicious. In such cases, the student may be liable for disciplinary action under the Student Conduct Regulations.
- (4) If the appeal is dismissed a Completion of Procedures letter will be issued confirming that the internal appeals procedure of the University has been completed and of the student's right to request that the University's decision be reviewed by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education.
- (5) Appeals which are not dismissed under the provisions of Section 15(4) will be investigated by an investigating officer from Student Administration and the findings will be presented in writing to a Pro-Vice-Chancellor or their nominee who will determine one of the following courses of action:



- (a) to reinstate the student's registration in full subject to any conditions which they may wish to impose;
  - (b) to confirm the decision to discontinue the student's registration;
  - (c) to convene an Appeals Committee to investigate the matter further through a formal hearing.
- (6) If an Appeals Committee is required, the Investigating Officer will inform the student of the arrangements and act as Secretary to the Committee. The Appeals Committee will comprise:
- (a) a Pro-Vice-Chancellor, or nominee, as Chair;
  - (b) the Director of PGR Education from the School in which the student has studied (or their nominee);
  - (c) two other members of academic staff from School(s) in which the student has studied, but not from the student's department(s);
  - (d) a member of the Students' Union.
- (7) The Executive Director of the Student Journey Division or their nominee will issue a Completion of Procedures letter informing the student in writing of the decision of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor or the Appeals Committee. The letter will explain the reasons for the decision and the student's right to request that the decision be reviewed by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education.

Drafted by	Academic Quality and Policy Office and Doctoral School	May 2025
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