

*UK Council for Graduate Education*

**THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE  
OF PhD ON THE BASIS OF  
PUBLISHED WORK  
IN THE UK**

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# **THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF PhD ON THE BASIS OF PUBLISHED WORK IN THE UK**

## **FOREWORD**

The UK Council for Graduate Education is an organisation established to promote the interests of graduate education in all disciplines in higher education institutions. The Council was established in 1994 and has over 110 institutional members. This report on the award of the degree of PhD by published work is the third in a series of publications investigating key issues in graduate education.

The report was prepared by Professor Keith Wilson, University of Hertfordshire, following a survey of the Council's member institutions in November 1995. The Council would also like to thank Professor Brenda Costall, University of Bradford and Mrs Renate Simpson for their invaluable assistance. The UK Council is very grateful to these individuals for their time and effort in preparing this report which is intended to assist institutions to consider ways in which this kind of doctoral work can be developed alongside other routes to the PhD while maintaining high quality and standards.

The report offers a picture of the availability of the award at November 1995 and raises a number of key issues the Council believes are fundamental to the control of the quality of the award of PhD by this route. This information will be of use both for those currently offering the award and for those considering it.

In order to enable Professor Wilson to include up-to-date information about the award of PhD on the basis of published work a questionnaire was sent to all UK Council member institutions. The Council would like to thank all those who responded to the questionnaire and all those who attended the workshop on the PhD by published work held in June 1996 for their input to the debate.

September 1996

Professor Robert G Burgess  
Chair, UK Council for Graduate Education

Further information about the UK Council may be obtained from:

Elizabeth Long  
Administrator  
UK Council for Graduate Education  
Lichfield Campus  
The Friary  
Lichfield, Staffs, WS13 6QG

Telephone: 01543 308602  
Fax: 01543 308604  
Email: [ukcge@ukcge.ac.uk](mailto:ukcge@ukcge.ac.uk)

## Preface

This report relates to the award of the degree of PhD to a candidate whose thesis consists entirely or predominantly of refereed and published articles in journals or books which are already in the public domain. The regulations for the award are distinct from those governing the award of a PhD on the basis of supervised research. Regulations for the award of PhD on the basis of published work are characterised by the lack of the requirement for a formal registration period, approved supervision and training programme. The report summarises the findings of a national survey of the regulations governing the award of PhD on the basis of published work and is presented as a discussion paper to stimulate further debate on the award.

## 1 Introduction

University and college regulations for the award of the degree of PhD based upon programmes of supervised research invariably make reference to the need for the examiners to establish that the candidate's research has made a contribution (sometimes *significant* contribution) to the knowledge of that discipline. Such evidence has to be sought within the candidate's thesis and examiners are asked to comment on the potential of the research for publication, yet the traditional indicators of contribution to knowledge are a chapter in an edited collection, an authored book or a refereed publication in an appropriate quality journal. The importance of such peer recognition of the quality of a candidate's research is acknowledged by many academic departments which encourage PhD candidates to publish the results of their research during the course of their research training. Rapid publication is increasingly essential in research areas, such as molecular biology and information technology, which are themselves developing rapidly. Some universities permit such publications to be substituted for a conventional chapter in the candidate's thesis, others require the candidate to insert the publications in a wallet at the end of the thesis whilst others merely require the candidate to list the publications in a declaration sheet at the front of the thesis. Thus the status of the published work in a candidate's thesis is not always clear and examiners are often uncertain of its eligibility for evaluation during the examination process. In distinct contrast, the examination of PhD submissions based on published work is centred on the individual publications in the thesis.

The concept of having a PhD submission wholly or largely based on published works emerged in Germany in the nineteenth century when theses had to be printed and copies placed in all national university libraries. This practice introduced the concept of 'publishability' and of 'going public' with the content of the thesis (Simpson<sup>1</sup>). These concepts were taken up in the US in the early part of the twentieth century but in both mainland Europe and the US the expense of printing the whole thesis eventually became a limiting factor in the award of the degree and the practice of making the award on the basis of published journal articles, book chapters or whole books emerged. In the UK there was a general reluctance to introduce the PhD as there was an anxiety that it would undermine the well-established higher doctorates and, in the case of London, masters degrees based on two years' supervised research. The United Kingdom Universities Conference of 18 May 1917 recommended the award of the PhD and the degree was first awarded by Oxford, albeit as DPhil (Simpson<sup>2</sup>). The PhD was seen as providing training for an academic career.

The practice of having a PhD submission based on published works is well established in some European countries notably Belgium, Holland and Sweden, but in none of these countries is it the sole route to a PhD. In the UK, the practice appears to have been taken up first by the University of Cambridge which set up a committee to report on the award of the degree of PhD in the early 1960's and took the decision to introduce the published work route in 1966. The original Cambridge regulations opened the degree to the alumni but excluded failed PhDs and prevented candidates from transferring from the conventional route. They required a compulsory oral examination and no college residence time (Simpson<sup>2</sup>). The first submission was in the area of social anthropology (McCullum<sup>3</sup>). The current Cambridge regulations have broadened these original eligibility criteria.

PhD theses based on published work are generally shorter than conventional PhD theses and present a different challenge to examiners even though the award of a PhD by the two routes have the same elements, namely evidence of training in research methodology appropriate to the discipline of the thesis; contribution to the knowledge of the discipline; and the candidate's knowledge of both the content of the thesis and the general subject area allied to that of the thesis. These different challenges to PhD examiners will be referred to later in this report (Section 7).

Although the published work route to PhD has been known in the UK for 30 years there has been no published analysis of its use by institutions. The general impression has been that the route is little used, but a session devoted to the topic at the Summer Residential Conference of the UK Council for Graduate Education (UKCGE), held at the University of Hertfordshire in July 1995, identified considerable and growing interest in the award. It was agreed at that meeting that the Executive Committee of the UKCGE should be asked to sponsor a survey of the award among its member HEIs. The Executive gave that support in October 1995 and this report is based on an analysis of the resulting survey.

## **2 Survey**

The survey was based on a questionnaire distributed to all institutions (107) which were at the time members of the UKCGE. This membership covered England, Wales and Northern Ireland but included only three Scottish HEIs. This lack of membership of the UKCGE north of the border reflects the fact that Scotland has the Scottish Forum for Graduate Education.

Replies were received from 73 institutions (68% response). These included 39 'traditional' universities, 24 'new' universities and 10 colleges. The replies showed that the award of PhD on the basis of published work was offered in 37 institutions (18 traditional universities (46%); 16 new universities (67%) and 3 colleges (30%) (Table 1).) The remaining 36 institutions (21 traditional universities; 8 new universities and 7 colleges) did not offer this route to PhD. Of the 36 not offering the degree, 8 declared that the matter was currently under consideration. A full analysis of the replies from institutions offering the award is given in Appendix 1.

Very significantly the group not offering the award involved the constituent colleges of the University of London (this defranchised 12 of the recipients of the

questionnaire, the majority of which are major ‘research-based’ institutions) and of the University of Wales (5 recipients defranchised). Within the traditional university sector there was no obvious rationale as to whether or not a particular university offered the degree. Thus Cambridge does and Oxford does not, Manchester does but UMIST and Salford do not. Within the new universities there was much greater commitment to the degree and greater uniformity of the associated regulations, but even in this sector some of the institutions noted for their research do not offer the degree of PhD on the basis of published work.

The new universities received their powers to award research degrees under the terms of Section 76 of the Further & Higher Education Act and Section 48 of the Further & Higher Education (Scotland) Act. These Acts contain no specific reference to the award of PhD and higher doctorates by published works.

Farrington<sup>4</sup> in his book *The Law of Higher Education* has called into question the powers of new universities to award higher doctorates on the basis of published work. He writes:

“...there appears also to be a limitation on the powers of the post-1992 English and Welsh universities to award higher doctorates (other than honorary degrees). This arises since although degrees may be awarded both to persons completing a programme of study or supervised research or to members of staff of the institution, there is no power to award degrees to others (eg. Alumni) who may wish to submit published work for a higher doctorate, a common practice in the older universities”.

Although this reservation related to higher doctorate degrees, it did call into question the powers of the new universities to award the degree of PhD on the basis of published work. A legal opinion has been obtained by CVCP on this apparent limitation to the degree awarding powers of the new universities. The opinion was that there was no intent to restrict and thereby disadvantage new universities in this respect to either higher doctorates or PhD on the basis of published work although the wording of Sections 76 of FHEA and Section 48 of FHESA are slack. Thus the current interest expressed by the new universities in the publication route to PhD appears to have legal authority.

Respondents to the survey reported that over the past two years 72 PhDs had been awarded by the publication route but that a relatively small number of institutions was responsible for the majority of the awards (Table 2).

The submission and examination fee for the degree of PhD on the basis of published work showed very wide variation with a notable contrast between the traditional and new universities. In the former sector the fee ranged from £115 (Nottingham) to £729 (Liverpool) with a mean of £330. Essex, Lancaster, Southampton Institute and the Open University do not charge a fee. In the new university sector the fees ranged from £200 (Wolverhampton) to £2700 (Portsmouth) with a mean of £1180. Westminster does not charge a fee. Many universities operate a differential fee for the degree with university staff either paying no fee or a substantially reduced one

relative to the fee paid by other eligible candidates. Institutions operating a two-stage submission (see Section 6 below) also reimburse a substantial part of the fee if the candidate's submission fails at the *prima facie* stage. Nevertheless, this extraordinarily wide range of fees does call into doubt the rationale basis on which the fee has been set and should encourage institutions to review their individual policies.

### **3 Eligibility**

Without exception, all institutions offering the award required candidates to be graduates with an appropriate 'good honours' degree. However, there was marked variation between the institutions as to which graduates were eligible to apply. Thus in five institutions, (Keele, Lancaster, Manchester, De Montfort and Wolverhampton) the award was confined to current members of academic staff. In 29 institutions both academic and other staff, including technical, research and administrative staff, and in some cases former members of academic staff, could apply for the award. 14 institutions offered the degree to graduates of the institution and in 12 institutions members of staff of affiliated, generally research-based, institutions were eligible for the award. Quite a number of institutions operate a qualifying period for eligibility ranging from 1 to 5 years employment in the institution. In some others, former members of staff must submit within 1 to 2 years of leaving the institution.

This considerable variation in eligibility qualifications between institutions raises the question of which groups of graduates are most likely to wish to take advantage of the published work route to PhD. In the UK the majority of candidates carrying out research for a PhD on a full-time basis are in the 21-26 year old category. They are registered on approved supervised research degree programmes which will result in the submission of a traditional thesis for examination. The discipline of producing such a thesis is regarded as an integral part of the research training process. It is doubtful if these students would wish to transfer to the published work route but in any case current regulations for PhD by the published work route of the majority of UK institutions surveyed in the present study would prohibit such a transfer. Published statistics show that although the three year full-time study is the major route to a PhD in the UK, large numbers of students are registered for a PhD by part-time study which may extend up to ten years depending upon the rate of progress. Part-time study, which is often not carried out within a university or college but in, for example, the candidate's place of work under the control of an approved supervisor, often presents candidates with the problem of protecting their research data until the time of their thesis submission. Such protection is best achieved by refereed publication so that the PhD by published work route may actually be attractive to such students if it is available and/or made known to them.

Part-time study for a PhD either by the conventional route or by the published work route is currently most attractive to individuals who, for a variety of reasons, do not have the opportunity to study by the full-time route immediately after graduation. Examples include individuals who enter higher education in mid-career especially in practice-based disciplines such as accountancy, business studies, education, engineering, nursing, social work and other professions allied to medicine. It is equally important for researchers in industry who begin their careers at the graduate level but move, often over a considerable period of time, to front-line research which



is of a quality at least as prestigious and meritorious as that carried out in universities. At a time when there are considerable national pressures to encourage greater academe-industry collaboration in research, it does seem anomalous that the published work route may not be recognised by some institutions as appropriate for submission for a PhD. Certainly by restricting its eligibility to current members of the university or college, there is a danger that the impression may be created inadvertently that the route is some form of privilege, perhaps even suggesting that it is less academically demanding than the traditional thesis route. In the same vein, it is pertinent to question why the regulations for PhD by published work of some institutions require all or the majority of the research to be carried out within the candidate's current appointment in the institution. Why should research in a previous appointment, perhaps in another academic institution, or research institute or industrial organisation, be discounted by some current regulations? Doubts about the candidate's training in research methodology or the individual's contribution to group research projects which probably underlie some of the current restrictions, can be addressed by the candidate within their critical review of their published work and by the examiners during a compulsory oral examination.

#### **4 Guidance on Publications**

Most of the institutions offering the award of PhD on the basis of published work, explicitly state in their regulations that the submitted works should constitute a coherent programme of research and make a (significant) contribution to knowledge. For comparability purposes with conventional PhDs, this requirement seems essential and correctly excludes submissions based on unrelated publications. Only one of the institutions offering the award (King Alfred's College) gives guidance on the number of publications (ten) expected in a normal submission. This issue of the number of publications expected in submissions is commonly raised by potential applicants and, in spite of the requirement that the award of a PhD by published work and by a conventional thesis should achieve comparability of standards, probably leads to an overestimate of the number of publications required for the published work route. Of course it is not easy to give a simple answer to the question of number of publications in a good thesis. The number of actual or potential publications in a conventional PhD thesis varies from one candidate to another in a given research area in a given department and undoubtedly varies between research areas. From the point of view of the award of a PhD by either route, the most important issue is the quality of the research. Ultimately the examiners have to be convinced that the publications represent an acceptable contribution to the field and that the methodology embodied in them is appropriate. In this respect, the question of the number of publications cited in a PhD submission is no different from the question of the number of publications in a higher doctorate submission where again the issue of numbers is subservient to the question of the quality and impact of the publications. For both degrees the critical appraisal of the publications, which is normally contained within the submission, is fundamental to the establishment of the coherence and quality of the submission and hence of the case for the award of the degree.

The majority of institutions give clear definitions of what constitutes 'published work'. Most commonly this requires the work to be in the public domain or to have at least been accepted (with proof) for publication. Thus confidential research reports on restricted circulation are generally not citable for the award. Whilst the

publication of research in a high quality journal is the norm in science and technology, the question of publication is less straight forward in the humanities and fine art. The publication of a book involves commercial considerations to at least as significant an extent as academic excellence so that the published work route may be a greater challenge in the humanities. In fine art and disciplines such as music and the performing arts the nature of the ‘publication’ and of the ‘refereeing’ process are fundamentally different again and institutional regulations need to give clear guidance to candidates on submission requirements.

The citation of multi-authored works appears to be allowed by all institutions offering the award. The associated regulations most commonly state that where multi-authored works are cited, the candidate should submit evidence of their individual contribution to the work. This raises issues of the significance of being first author and of who should endorse the candidate’s statement – co-authors and/or senior managers for example – and what is expected within the profile of the candidate’s statement. For example, if four phases are common to all published work – design of the investigation, conduct of the research, analysis of the outcome and preparation of the work for publication – should the candidate make the major contribution to each phase or are there acceptable lows as well as highs? Such questions are fundamental to collaborative research especially that carried out on a team basis including that in the social sciences. In the sciences, engineering and technology areas it raises the question as to how much of the ‘practical’ work should be carried out by the applicant. Such questions, of course, are not confined to the published work route as many conventional theses contain the results of collaborative research. Provided this is acknowledged in the thesis, such collaboration is generally acceptable, but in the published work route it is brought into focus more explicitly. It would seem essential that the degree regulations should give guidance on the university’s expectations of such matters but none currently appear to do so. Thus examiners are left to make their own decisions and this may lead to variability of practice and standard. The significance of being the first author in a multi-authored publication varies between research areas as well as between the editorial policies of individual journals. If being the first author has a special significance, the candidate would be well advised to make this known within their critical review.

## **5 Guidance and Advice**

Conventional PhD candidates enjoy the support and advice of their supervisors not only during the research phase of their registration, but also during the preparation of their theses. In the published work route to a PhD an appointed supervisor is absent but candidates do need guidance on their submission particularly in those cases where the awarding institution requires the submission to include some form of critical review of the candidate’s published work. This need for support is recognised by 21 of the 36 awarding institutions by the provision of a supervisor, mentor or advisor. The person given this responsibility varies from the candidate’s head of department to an individual with appropriate research expertise specifically appointed for the task by the Board of Graduate Studies or Research Degrees Committee.

The appointment of an academic to guide the candidate through the submission and examination processes is one of the means by which the academic standards for the award of a PhD by the conventional and published work routes can be harmonised.

Ideally the regulations for the award via the published work route should make reference to the duties of the appointed person and in principle it would be possible to formulate a code of good practice for the appointee to parallel those which exist for supervisors of conventional PhD students. Possible responsibilities include:

- Giving guidance on the selection, coherence and quality of the candidate's published work to be submitted for examination;
- Advice on the preparation of supporting critical summary and review to accompany the submission;
- Guidance on the preparation for the oral examination.

Institutional regulations could also make it clear as to whether or not the appointee is permitted to attend the oral examination.

## **6 Nature of Submission**

23 of the 37 institutions (7/18 traditional universities; 15/16 new universities; 1/3 colleges) offering the degree require a two stage submission. The first is designed to establish a *prima facie* case for the application and generally consists of the submission of details (list) of the cited publications and a short analysis of the contribution to knowledge made by them. The second phase consists of the compiled, cited publications with or without an accompanying analysis. In all of the traditional universities which operate a *prima facie* stage, the assessment is made by internal (university) members of staff. In the case of the new universities, one half operate an internal assessment procedure and one half operate a joint internal/external (ie. Independent) assessment. Although the survey questionnaire did not specifically raise the question of payment of an honorarium to external assessors, most institutions are believed to operate such a policy.

There was a high degree of commonality of policy on the nature of the full submission in the new universities, but significantly less so in the traditional universities. Thus all the new universities require the submitted publications to be accompanied by some supportive analysis. In the vast majority of institutions this consisted of a 5000-10000 word critical appraisal. In the regulations of Southampton Institute this is reduced to 1000 words and in those of Plymouth to 3000 words. The traditional universities Cambridge, Hull, Keele and Nottingham require the publications alone; Bristol and Kent require the publications and a statement or an abstract whilst Aston, Bradford, Birmingham, Bristol, Lancaster, Liverpool, Manchester, Southampton, Surrey and Warwick all require a more substantial critical appraisal (essay).

## **7 Examination**

All institutions required the appointment of at least two examiners. In the case of Bradford, Essex, Kent, Liverpool, Manchester, Nottingham and Warwick in the traditional university sector and Northumbria, South Bank and Westminster in the new university sector both examiners are external to the university. In all other institutions a combination of internal and external (at least one) examiners are

appointed. The appointment of two external supervisors for members of staff is common practice.

In two institutions (Keele and Nottingham) there is no compulsory oral examination. In five others (Bradford, Essex, Kent, Lancaster and Southampton) an oral examination is at the discretion of the examiners and in all 30 other institutions, which includes all the English new universities, an oral examination is compulsory. The role of the oral examination in research degree awards has been reviewed in the recent report from the UK Council for Graduate Education *Quality and Standards of Postgraduate Research Degrees*<sup>6</sup>.

Bearing in mind the distinction in criteria for the award of MPhil and PhD, it is interesting that nine traditional universities (Aston, Bradford, Birmingham, Hull, Kent, Liverpool, Nottingham, Southampton and Warwick), four new universities (De Montfort, Leeds Metropolitan, Luton and Westminster) and King Alfred's College allow the award of MPhil to emerge from the examination process. Whilst Queen's University Belfast has no regulations for the award of PhD on the basis of published work, it does have regulations for the award of MPhil on the basis of published work.

As previously mentioned, a PhD awarded on the basis of published work should reflect the same academic standards as those which operate for a traditional PhD based upon an approved programme of supervised research. This requirement for comparability of standard presents different challenges to the examiners for the award of a PhD by the two routes. In the case of the published work route, the examiners' main tasks are:

- To evaluate the quality of the candidate's cited published work;
- To establish the coherence between the publications;
- To assess the contribution to knowledge represented by the publications;
- To evaluate the methodology by which the research was conducted;
- To place the publications within the time frame and facilities within which the publications were made;
- To assess the candidate's contribution to the various phases of the research embodied in multi-authored works (see Section 4);
- To establish the candidate's 'ownership' of the published work and appreciation of the state of knowledge within the candidate's research area;
- To assess the candidate's interpersonal skills.

One of the difficulties which may be faced by examiners in their execution of these examination responsibilities is that the publications may not contain sufficient detail to allow some judgements to be made. This is particularly the case in the science and engineering areas where journal policy invariably prescribes succinctness and general lack of experimental detail. Thus the evidence available to the examiner on the

quality of the work and occasionally the (raw) data on which important conclusions are based, is often minimal or even absent. In contrast, traditional theses are rich in such data. A good example is in chemistry submissions based upon synthetic organic chemistry in which analytical and spectroscopic data for structure assignments are commonly not included in published papers. Such lack of crucial evidence can be partially addressed within the accompanying critical appraisal of the published work required by the majority of institutions, but this may require a degree of flexibility within the regulations relating to the length of the critical review to allow the candidate to provide adequate evidence. It is difficult to see how such matters can be effectively assessed by examiners within regulations which either require no critical appraisal of the submitted work or which severely restrict its length. Certainly the lack of a compulsory oral examination deprives examiners of the opportunity to pursue issues of concern although of course submissions for higher doctorates based on published work do not traditionally involve an oral examination.

## **8 Conclusion**

The two routes to a PhD, one based on a supervised programme of research and the submission of a traditional thesis, the other based upon research leading to a number of coherent publications, each of which has been subjected to peer review, have in common an emphasis on appropriate research methodology and the requirement that the candidate should make a contribution to the advancement of the research field. Their major differences are the formality of the training process and the composition of the thesis on which the candidate is examined. In conventional registrations the appointed supervisor(s) takes responsibility for training the candidate in research methodology and for ensuring that the candidate develops appropriate personal and interpersonal skills. In the published work route such training is recognised and evaluated in retrospect and in this respect is analogous to the acceptability of APL in taught undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. Differences in the composition of the candidate's thesis via the two routes calls into question the current relevance of a traditional thesis, with its emphasis on comprehensive but critical coverage of the research programme, to the candidate's future career as a trained researcher for whom the recognised symbol of success is high quality, refereed publications. At a time when the rapid advancement of knowledge and the conduct of research quality assessment exercises such as those conducted by the funding councils, attach top priority to publications, training in the preparation of research publications should be an essential component of the PhD training programme to the point that persuasive arguments can be put forward for successes at publishing to be a prominent feature of a PhD examination even for candidates whose future careers lie outside academia. However, the traditional thesis remains central to award of a PhD by UK universities and colleges and the published work route is of low quantitative importance as the present survey has confirmed. In spite of voices such as that of Barton<sup>7</sup>, who has severely criticised the traditional UK PhD thesis, the balance of the relative importance of the two routes to PhD is unlikely to change dramatically in the near future. Ideally, there does appear to be merit in consideration being given by institutions to allowing the two routes to merge thereby encouraging all theses to include published work and for unpublished data to be written in the style of published work. Such policy appears to operate satisfactorily in Dutch universities.

It is not clear why half of the institutions surveyed in the present study do not offer the award of the degree of PhD by the published work route. Possible reasons include the belief that there is little demand for the route and concern over the lack of control of the candidate's supervision and training. Whatever the reasons, it does seem anomalous that the opportunity to submit for a PhD via the publication route should be dependent upon one's Alma Mater or current employing institution. In the light of these variations in practice for the award, institutions may wish to review both their policy and their regulations for the award with a view to there being greater uniformity within the sector. The ultimate priority should be to ensure that the publication route and the conventional thesis route to a PhD invoke the same degree of academic rigor and achieve the same high quality standards. This requires the appointment of experienced examiners who have an intimate knowledge of the candidate's research area.

The survey has identified a number of key issues which the UK Council for Graduate Education believes are fundamental to the control of the quality of the award of PhD by published work route and which institutions may therefore wish to consider in relation to their regulations for the award. These include:

- Policy on eligibility for candidature and consideration to the question of whether or not the principle of equality of opportunity should prevail for all potential categories of candidates (Section 3);
- The length of the qualifying period from graduation to eligibility to submit for a PhD (Section 3);
- The permitted period of time over which the research embodied in the submission may be carried out;
- The location where the research may be carried out (Section 3);
- Policy on the candidate's contribution to multi-authored publications including supporting evidence and balance of profile (Section 4);
- Policy on the provision of a supervisor/mentor/advisor to support the candidate on his/her submission and the responsibilities associated with the appointment (Section 5);
- The relative merits of a one or two-stage submission process and the identity and appointment procedure for assessors for a *prima facie* initial stage (Section 6);
- The number and appointment procedure for examiners and the level of fees for examiners and assessors (if any) (Section 6);
- Policy on oral examination - compulsory, discretionary or none (Section 7);

- Guidance on the length and objectives of supporting critical review (appraisal) (Sections 6 and 7);
- Policy on allowing supervisor/mentor/advisor to attend the oral examination (Section 5);
- Policy on allowing an MPhil to be awarded to candidates who fail to achieve the standard of PhD (Section 7);
- Policy on the candidate's submission and examination fee for the award (Section 2).

Greater harmonisation of policy and guidelines on these key regulatory issues between awarding institutions would help to allay anxieties about the academic merits of the publication route to PhD. The end products of the research embodied in such a submission are the quality of the candidate as a researcher and the quality of the research he or she has carried out. Both are open to scrutiny by the appointed examiners and a more universal agreement on the nature of the candidate's submission and examination process would make their responsibilities easier to carry out.

The UK Council for Graduate Education is in an ideal position to promote the dissemination of good practice to facilitate this desirable harmonisation and an excellent start was made in the Workshop on the subject organised by the Council on 7 June 1996.

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**TABLE 1 Institutional policy on the use of powers to award the degree of PhD on the basis of published work (as at November 1995).**

**A Traditional universities offering the award:**

Aston, Bradford, Birmingham\*, Bristol, Cambridge, Essex, Hull, Keele, Kent, Lancaster, Liverpool, Manchester, Nottingham, Open, Southampton, Surrey, Warwick.

**B New universities offering the award:**

Brighton, De Montfort, Greenwich, Hertfordshire, Leeds Metropolitan, Luton, Northumbria, Nottingham Trent, Plymouth, Portsmouth, Sheffield Hallam, South Bank, Sunderland, Teesside, Westminster, Wolverhampton.

**C Colleges offering the award:**

Cheltenham and Gloucester (validated by Bristol), King Alfred's College (validated by Southampton), Southampton Institute (validated by Nottingham Trent).

**D Traditional universities not offering the award:**

Brunel, Durham, East Anglia\*\*, Exeter\*\*, Leeds, London (London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, Institute of Education, London Business School, London School of Economics, Royal Holloway and Bedford New College, School of Slavonic and Eastern European Studies, University College), Oxford, Salford\*\*, Sheffield, Sussex, UMIST, University of Wales (Aberystwyth, Cardiff, Swansea), Queen's University Belfast.

**E New universities not offering the award;**

Abertay Dundee, Anglia Polytechnic University\*\*, Derby\*\*, Guildhall, Kingston\*\*, North London, Oxford Brookes, Robert Gordon.

**F Colleges not offering the award;**

Bolton Institute, Buckingham, Gwent, Harper Adams\*\*, Nene, Roehampton Institute, Worcester.

\* Faculty of Science only

\*\* Institutions considering the award



**TABLE 2      PhDs awarded on the basis of published work in past  
two years (1993-1995)**

Cambridge	18
Manchester	12
Surrey	7
Hull	6
Bradford	5
Hertfordshire	5
South Bank	4
Warwick	3
Northumbria	2

Brighton, Essex, Keele, Kent, Lancaster, Nottingham, Open, Plymouth, Portsmouth and Southampton Institute have each awarded one degree.

### Appendix 1. Analysis of the regulations for the award of the degree of PhD on the basis of published work

Institution	Eligibility – Categories	Eligibility – Restrictions	Supervisor	Prima Facie Stage	Submission	Examiners	Oral Examination	MPhil	Fee (£)	No
Aston	A,B,D	Former academic staff must be graduates of the University.  Staff must be in employment of the University for three years. Graduates must be of eight years' standing	Yes – HoD	No	Publications + synopsis	2 – external for staff, internal and external others	Compulsory	Yes	-	0
Birmingham	A,B,C,D,E	Candidates must be in employment of University for two years.	Yes – Dean	Yes – University staff act as assessors	Publications + introduction & overall discussion	At least 2 – internal and external	Compulsory	Yes	-	0
Bradford	A,C	Staff must be in employment of University for two years	Yes – Dean	Yes – University staff act as assessors	Publications + critical appraisal (1000 words)	2 – external	Discretionary	Yes	180	5
Brighton	A,B,C	Candidates must be employee of the University	Yes - mentor	Yes – two assessors, internal & external 3000 word submission	Publication + 6000 word critical appraisal	3 – internal & external (2)	Compulsory	No	1000	1

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Bristol	A,B,C,D	Candidates must be graduates of at least six years' standing & staff must be in employment of University for three years. Publications restricted to four year period. Works may cover number of topics. Greater weight to substantial papers than superficial notes.	Yes – HoD	No	Publications + statement	At least 2 – internal and external	Compulsory	No	-	-
Cambridge	A,B,C,D	Candidates must be graduates of at least six years' standing.  Current staff are eligible provided they hold established posts	No	Yes. Degree Committee assesses	Publications	At least 2 – internal & external	Compulsory	No	350	18
Cheltenham & Gloucester  (accredited by University of Bristol)	A,C	Candidates must be graduates of at least six years' standing								

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De Montfort	A	Members of staff must be in employment of the University for three years	Yes – Director of Studies	Yes – University staff	Publications + 10,000 – 25,000 word critical appraisal	3 – internal & external (2)	Compulsory	Yes	-	0
Essex	A,B	Former academic staff only eligible within one year of leaving	No	No	Publications with or without other supporting evidence	2 – external	Discretionary	No	Nil	1
Greenwich	A,B,C,D		Yes – supervisor	Yes – University staff	Publications + 5000 word (science), 10,000 word (arts) critical appraisal	3 – internal & external (2)	Compulsory	No	750	0
Hertfordshire	A,B,C,D,E	Candidates must be graduates of at least three years' standing. Staff of research organisations linked to University are eligible	Yes – academic supervisor from membership of Research Degrees Committee	Yes – at least two assessors, internal & external, with 1000 word submission	Publications + 10,000 word critical appraisal	At least 2 – internal & external	Compulsory	No	1500	5

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Hull	A,C,D	Candidates must be graduates of at least eight years' standing  Members of staff must be in employment of the University for four years	No	Yes, Chairman of Research Graduate Committee	Publications	2 internal & external  Members of staff – 2 external & 1 internal	Compulsory	Yes	375	6
Keele	A	Staff must be in post for at least three years. Major part of research must be carried out in university	No	Yes. HoD + Research Degree Sub-Committee	Publications	3 – internal & external (2)	No	No	150	1
Kent	A,B,C,D	Candidates must be employees of university for at least two years	No	No	Publications + abstract	2 – external	Discretionary	Yes	130	1
King Alfred's (accredited by the University of Southampton)	A,C		Yes	No	Publication + critical appraisal	3 – internal & external (2)	Compulsory	Yes	-	-
Lancaster	A	Candidates must have 'demonstrated their ability in graduate studies'	Yes – internal advisor	Yes. Dean of Postgraduate Studies plus others	Publications + critical appraisal	3 – internal & external (2)	Discretionary	No	Nil	1
Leeds Metropolitan	A,B,C,D,E	The University will consider applications from any suitably qualified candidates	Yes – two supervisors	Yes – University staff	Publications + 8000 word critical appraisal	At least 2 – internal & external	Compulsory	No	2490	0

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Liverpool & Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine	A,B	Former members of staff must submit within two years of leaving	Yes – appointed by HoD	No	Publications	2 – external	Compulsory	Yes	729	-
Luton	A,B,C,D,E	The University will consider applications from any suitably qualified candidates	Yes – supervisor for six months	Yes – at least two assessors, internal & external with 3000 word submission	Publications + 10,000 word critical appraisal	At least 2 – internal & external	Compulsory	Yes	1500	0
Manchester	A	Candidates must be in employment of University for three years	No	No	Publications + critical appraisal	2 – external	Compulsory	No	320	12
Northumbria	A,B,C,E	Staff must be in employment of University for at least two years. Similar qualification period for staff of Affiliated Institutions. All applicants must be graduates of at least five years' standing	Yes – member of Research Degrees Committee	Yes – normally. University staff with 300 word submission	Publication + 5000 word critical appraisal	2 – internal & external	Compulsory	No	750	2
Nottingham	A,B	Former members of staff must submit within three years of leaving	Yes – HoD called 'Advisor'	Yes - Senate	Publications	2 - external	No	Yes	115	1

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Nottingham Trent	A,B,E	Staff must be in employment of University for at least three years and research carried out during the appointment must form a significant part of the submission	No	Yes – Research Degrees Committee	Publications + critical appraisal	2 or 3, not more than one internal	Compulsory	No	-	0
Open	A,C,E	Candidates must be in employment of University or Sponsoring Establishments for three years	Yes – appointed by Senate	No	Publications + critical appraisal	3 – internal and external (2)	Compulsory	No	Nil	1
Plymouth	A,C,E	Candidates must be full-time staff of institution and in post for at least five years. Staff of Affiliated Institutions may apply	Yes – Dept research coordinator	Yes – University staff	Publications + 3000 word critical appraisal	3 – internal and external (2)	Compulsory	No	1200	1
Portsmouth	A,C,D	Candidates must be graduates of at least five years' standing	Yes – appointed by Research Degrees Committee	Yes – internal & external	Publications + 5000-10,000 word critical appraisal	3 – internal & external (2)	Compulsory	No	400 (staff) 2700 (external)	1
Sheffield Hallam	A,B,C,D,E	Staff of Affiliated Institutions may apply	No	Yes – normally University staff	Publications + 5000 word critical appraisal	3 – internal & external (2)	Compulsory	No	350	0

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South Bank	A,E	Staff of institutions associated with work of University may apply	Yes	Yes – University staff	Publications + critical appraisal	2 – external	Compulsory	No	1600	4
Southampton	A,C	-	No	No	Publications + critical appraisal	3 – internal & external (2)	Discretionary	Yes	335	-
Southampton Institute (accredited by Nottingham Trent)	A	Candidates must be in employment of Institute for three years. Research carried out during that period of employment should form a significant contribution to the published work	No	Yes – external	Publications + 1000 word appraisal	3 – internal & external (2)	Compulsory	No	Nil	1
Sunderland	A,B,C,D	Candidates must be honours graduates or have five years' research activity with significant output	Yes – advisor	Yes – normally University staff	Publications + 5000 – 10,000 word critical appraisal	2 or 3 not more than 1 internal	Compulsory	No	1200	0
Surrey	A,C,E	University candidates must be in employment of University for three years	No	No	Publications + critical appraisal	At least two – at least two external	Compulsory	No	500	7
Teesside	A,B,C,D,E	Candidates must be graduates of at least five years' standing. Staff of Affiliated Institutions may apply	Yes – advisor	Yes – internal & external (2)	Publications + contextual essay	2 – internal & external	Compulsory	No	800	0

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Warwick	A,C	Candidates must be in employment of University for three years	Yes – appointed by HoD	No	Publications + critical appraisal (5-10,000 words)	2 – external	Compulsory	Yes	450	3
Westminster	A,C	Publications produced not more than five years before submission	Yes	Yes – University staff	Publications + critical appraisal	2 - external	Compulsory	Yes	Nil	0
Wolverhampton	A	Candidates must be in employment of University for at least five years. Publications produced not more than three years before submission	Yes	No	Publications + 5000 word critical appraisal	3 – internal & external (2)	Compulsory	No	-	0

**Key: A = Current academic staff; B = former academic staff; C = current other University staff;  
D = alumni; E = others. MPhil indicates whether or not MPhil can be awarded rather than PhD  
No = number of PhDs awarded in previous two years  
- in 'Fee' or 'No' column indicates not known**

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