



Title: Assessment Criteria for Research Degrees

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Assessment Criteria

Doctoral level awards – PhD (including PhD by Published Works) and Professional Doctorates

1. **Achievement** will be assessed by the examination of the candidate's thesis and performance under oral examination. (In the case of Professional Doctorates this will also include the assessment of achievement by a variety of methods in accordance with the learning outcomes of any modules specified for the programme and their associated published assessment criteria.) Assessment will normally be based on the candidate successfully demonstrating achievement of an appropriate combination of the following criteria:

- the creation and interpretation of new knowledge and/or the invention and generation of ideas, through original research, of a quality to satisfy peer review, extend the forefront of the discipline and merit publication;
- 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;
- the ability to relate the results of such study to the general body of knowledge in the discipline;
- the general ability to conceptualise, design and implement a project for the generation of new knowledge, applications or understanding at the forefront of the discipline, and to adjust the project design in the light of unforeseen problems;
- a detailed understanding of applicable methods and techniques for research and advanced academic inquiry;
- the ability to evaluate and criticise received opinion;
- the ability to make reasoned and well-informed judgements on complex issues within the specialism whilst understanding the limitations on judgements made in the absence of complete data;
- the ability to communicate the results of the programme of research as demonstrated in the style and overall presentation of the thesis.
- the ability to defend the thesis orally to the satisfaction of the examiners.

Master's level awards by research - MPhil

2. **Achievement** will be assessed by the examination of the candidate's thesis and performance under oral examination. Assessment will normally be based on the candidate successfully demonstrating achievement of an appropriate combination of the following criteria:

- a systematic understanding of a substantial body of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of the academic discipline, field of study, or area of professional practice;
- a comprehensive understanding of methods and techniques applicable to the research or advanced scholarship;
- originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and inquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline;
- conceptual understanding that enables:
 - the critical evaluation of current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline; and
 - the evaluation of methodologies, the development of critiques of them and, where appropriate, the proposal of new hypotheses;
- the ability to evaluate and criticise received opinion;
- the ability to make reasoned judgements whilst understanding the limitations on judgements made in the absence of complete data;
- the ability to communicate the results of the programme of research as demonstrated in the style and overall presentation of the thesis.
- the ability to defend the thesis orally to the satisfaction of the examiners.

NB

In judging the merit of a thesis submitted in candidature for any research degree, the Examiners shall bear in mind the standard and scope of work which it is reasonable to expect a capable and diligent student to present after the period of registered full-time or part-time study.