

# Academic Regulations for Students Research Degree Programmes, Section 1: Research Degree Students

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**UCL Student and Registry Services Division**  
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## Introduction to Section 1: Research Degree Students - Programme of Study

The General Regulations apply to all University College London (UCL) MPhil/PhD/EngD/MD(Res) students.

The Academic Regulations for Students for Research Degree students are UCL's overarching regulations and students should read these regulations together with local regulations for the Department and Faculty housing their programme of study. EngD students should also read these together with the Section 3 Specific Programme regulations.

[Doctor in Engineering \[EngD\]: Section 3, Specific Programme Regulation \(PDF\)](#)

### 1 Admission to research degree programmes

#### 1.1 Standard Qualifications for Admission: MPhil/PhD Programmes

The normal minimum entrance qualification for registration for the MPhil degree or the PhD degree is:

- i) an upper second class honours degree of a UK university or an overseas qualification of an equivalent standard obtained after a programme of study extending over not less than three years in a university (or educational institution of university rank), in a subject appropriate to that of the programme to be followed; or
- ii) a registrable qualification appropriate to the programme to be followed awarded by a UK university in Medicine, Dentistry or Veterinary Studies; or a qualification of an equivalent standard appropriate to the programme to be followed awarded by a university (or educational institution of university rank) outside the UK; or
- iii) a Master's degree from a UK University in a subject appropriate to the programme to be followed; or
- iv) a professional or other qualification obtained by written examinations and approved by UCL as an appropriate entrance qualification for the MPhil or PhD degree in question.

Applicants should also consult the relevant Departmental/Divisional admission requirements.

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- iv) MRes students who are not awarded the degree after the first attempt and the resit attempt should not progress to the associated EngD or PhD programme and would be required to leave UCL.
- v) MRes students who fail the dissertation should not register on the EngD or PhD programme in the following academic year but remain on the MRes and resubmit the dissertation by the end of the first term in the following academic year. The Board would then consider the award for these students in January, when they would be allowed to register on the EngD or PhD if they passed. If, as a result, they missed taught components which formed part of the EngD or PhD registration, these should be followed at the point when they are next available.

### **Further guidance on MRes Progression to an Associated Research Degree Programme**

- i) These regulations only apply to students on MRes programmes which form an integral part of an associated doctoral programme.
- ii) The previously agreed mark requirements over and above

Medicine and be eligible for full registration or hold limited registration with the General Medical Council (GMC); or have obtained the BDS degree or hold an equivalent dental qualification.

## **1.5 Alternative Qualifications for Admission to a Research Degree**

Applicants possessing alternative qualifications may also be considered by UCL for registration.

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## 2 Registration, transfers and courses of study

### 2.1 Dual Registration

A student is not permitted to be formally registered for one programme of study at UCL at the same time as being formally registered (or re-sitting examinations) for another programme of study at UCL or any other Higher Education Institution.

#### Further guidance on dual registration

Students can accept an offer of a place from UCL when they are still formally registered with another Higher Education Institution, or if they are re-sitting examinations. However, they may not formally register with UCL until they have completed their registration with another institution.

### 2.2 Application and Initial Registration

An applicant for a PhD degree will be registered initially for the MPhil degree.

#### Further guidance on application and initial registration

- i) All successful applicants, with the exception of the EngD and other specialist doctorate programmes, are initially registered for an MPhil degree, except where the applicant is exceptionally well qualified and UCL has given special permission for initial registration for the PhD degree.
- ii) Every student must complete enrolment as instructed within two weeks of the start of their research programme and must undertake to comply with the conditions of enrolment.
- iii) An applicant for registration is required to produce for inspection by UCL the original documentary evidence of their qualifications either before or at registration — i.e. the original diploma or certificate of the awarding body. An applicant for the MD(Res) degree will be registered at UCL in the names under which he/she has been registered with the GMC.

### 2.3 Exemption from Part of a Programme of Study

UCL may exempt from part of the programme of study of the MPhil/PhD degree, research degree students who have commenced a programme of study for the MPhil or PhD degree (or equivalent degree) of another university in the United Kingdom, provided that the programme of study followed at UCL is not less than one calendar year; or its equivalent in part-time study.

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**Further guidance on exemption from part of a programme**

- i) Applications for exemption should be made at the point of admission and are considered on a case by case basis.

## **Link for Section 2.4**

[Online student research log](#)

[Code of Practice for Graduate Research Degrees](#)

## **2.5 Attendance Requirements**

A programme must be pursued continuously except by special permission of UCL. Students must be in a position to meet all the requirements determined for their studies.

- i) With the exception of non-resident PhD programmes (see 2.10), students, whether full-time or part-time, are expected to centre their academic studies on UCL. Students should ensure they are able to attend UCL in person for teaching and meetings as required by their supervisors.
- ii) Students must obtain approval before they leave to collect or study material remote from UCL or work in remote facilities. (See link at the end of this section.)

### **Links for Section 2.5**

[Changes to your registration status](#)

## **2.6 Length of Programme: MPhil/PhD and MD(Res) Programmes**

The lengths of UCL research degree programmes are as follows:

- i) the length of a PhD/MPhil programme is normally 3 years full time and 5 years part-time.
- ii) the length of the MD(Res) is normally two calendar years of full-time or part-time study.

Students may not interrupt their period of registration without prior permission from UCL.

Unless prior exemption from a part of the programme has been agreed, a student must be registered for at least 2 calendar years full-time, or 3 calendar years part-time, before he/she will be allowed to submit her/his thesis for examination for the PhD or the MPhil degree.

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A student must be registered for at least 2 calendar years before he/she will be allowed to submit her/his thesis for examination for the MD(Res) degree.

In the case of registration for the PhD and the MPhil degree, unless prior exemption from a part of the programme has been agreed, students must be registered for at least 3 calendar years full-time, or 5 calendar years part-time, before they will be eligible to adopt Completing Research Status.

In the case of registration for the MD(Res) degree, students must be registered for at least two calendar years before they will be eligible to adopt Completing Research Status.

### **Further guidance on length of programmes**

- i) Requests to submit a thesis earlier than the minimum periods of registration specified in the regulation above may be considered by the Chair of the Research Degrees Committee. Requests should be made in writing via the Student Centre (see link at the end of this section) and should include a statement of support from the Supervisor and/or Head of Department. The Research Degrees Committee will monitor the outcome of such requests by scrutiny of examiners' reports on the candidates' theses. Students and staff should note that early submission of a thesis will not be considered as an extenuating circumstance when deciding the outcome of the examination of a thesis.
- ii) Students who submit early would be liable for tuition fees up to the date of the submission of the thesis but would not be liable for tuition fees thereafter.
- iii) UCL also runs certain Research Council funded PhD programmes which run for a four year duration (e.g. the MRC Wellcome Trust funded programmes in Neuroscience).
- iv) Interruption of Study

Interruption of Study may be granted on the authorisation of the Director of Student Services, on behalf of the Research Degrees Committee provided that a statement of support from the Principal Supervisor and/or Head of Department/Division is received. If approved, the period of interruption of study granted will be initially not more than one calendar year and any further period of interruption of study will be considered one year at a time. UCL may, at its discretion, grant an interruption of study to a student on grounds of illness or other adequate reasons. The need to take up or pursue employment during the programme will not normally be considered grounds for interruption of studies.

Interruption of Study for a period in excess of two calendar years may be granted by the Chair of the Research Degrees Committee subject to the following conditions:

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- a) The period requested will be considered on an annual basis and will not exceed five calendar years from the date when the period of interruption starts.
- b) The date when the submission of the thesis falls due following resumption of study falls within ten years of the date of original registration.
- c) Written assurances, with supporting documentation, from the Supervisor and/or the Head of Department that the research will still be valid and are provided.

**Link for Section 2.6**

[UCL Student Centre](#)

## **2.7 Upgrade from MPhil Degree to PhD Degree**

Upgrade from MPhil to PhD registration may be made not less than nine months after initial registration for the MPhil degree for full-time students, and not less than fifteen months after initial reBT1 0e MPhd ns

## **2.9 Transfer between MPhil/PhD and MD (Res) Degrees**

A student may, with the permission of UCL, transfer from the MD(Res) degree to the MPhil/PhD degree, provided they have not entered for the examination of an MD(Res) degree; or from the MPhil/PhD degree to the MD(Res)

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between the Department and the student are in place and that these arrangements comply with UCL requirements for frequency of contact between supervisor and student as set out in the Code of Practice for Graduate Research Degrees. (See link at the end of this section.) The use of the Online Research Student Log is an essential part of these requirements. Such statements should be submitted in writing to the Chair of RDC via the UCL Admissions Office (email [admissions@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:admissions@ucl.ac.uk).)

- iii) In cases where an approved research programme has been set up with a specific institution or institutions which have formal collaborative agreements with UCL, approval of individual applications, as described above, will not need to be submitted to the Chair

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### **3.3 Submission of Thesis**

A student must submit a thesis for examination before the end of his or her CRS period. A student will remain registered after the submission of his or her thesis until the award of the degree. He or she will be entitled to a UCL student identity card and will be able to use all the general UCL facilities and services while preparing for a viva examination or making minor revisions to a thesis.

### **3.4 Extensions to the Completing Research Period**

A student who cannot submit a thesis for examination before the end of CRS due to circumstances outside his or her control may apply for an extension. *The maximum period of extension is one year, full-time and two years, part-time.*

#### **Further guidance on extensions to the completing research period**

Applications for extension to CRS must be made on the application form available from the Registry and Academic Services Division. Applications must be supported by a student's department and may be made on the grounds of illness of student or close relative, maternity leave, bereavement, responsibilities as a primary carer or academic circumstances out of the control of the student. Work commitments or any duties carried out for a department are not considered grounds for extension; submission of a thesis is expected to be a priority. Applications on the grounds of the illness or termination of employment of the principal supervisor may be considered but departments are expected to make arrangements for alternative supervision under such circumstances.

### **3.5 Submission of a thesis after the end of CRS**

A student who submits late will be liable for a late submission penalty fee.

A student who does not submit a thesis before the end of his or her CRS registration will cease to be registered as a student at the end of this CRS period. He or she will not be entitled to access to UCL facilities and services and will not be entitled to supervisory advice. In addition, any student who wishes to submit after the end of his or her CRS registration will require permission to do so; this must be supported by a student's supervisor or other departmental authority. If granted, the student will be permitted to submit but will not be re-registered unless his or her department require this.

#### **Further guidance on the submission of a thesis after the end of CRS**

All students who submit after the end of their CRS registration will pay a penalty fee equivalent to the part-time home fee current at the time. This fee will come into effect the day after the end of their CRS registration and will increment after three

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A Principal Supervisor should normally:

- i) have satisfactorily completed any probationary period attached to his/her appointment;
- ii) have expertise in the area of the proposed research;
- iii) have had previous experience of at least one successful PhD, EngD, MD(Res) or MRes supervision, as appropriate, within a supervisory team (defined as having taken a student all the way through to a research degree award)

Subsidiary Supervisor should normally:

- i) have expertise relevant to the area of proposed research
- ii) be familiar with the standards required for MPhil/PhD/EngD/MD(Res)/MRes research.

In the case of EngD programmes, the Industrial Supervisor must also satisfy the requirements laid down above for the Subsidiary Supervisor.

A probationary member of academic staff may be appointed as Principal Supervisor, if supervision is undertaken within the context of an experienced supervisory team comprising at least one demonstrably active researcher with experience of at least two successful supervisions.

A Research Associate may be invited to act as a Subsidiary Supervisor but must, in addition to the requirements specified for Subsidiary Supervisors:

- i) have a research contract lasting at least 3 years from the time the supervised student commences his/her programme of study;
  - ii) be able to provide evidence of good quality publications for which they have had a substantial degree of responsibility.
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- i) Principal supervisors who are probationary members of staff must also have participated in an appropriate UCL supervisor's workshop.
  - ii) Supervisors who have completed a probationary period but have not previously supervised a research student should also meet the requirements outlined above. New senior members of academic staff with experience of MPhil/PPmembers M

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**Link for Section 4.2**

[PhD Student Supervision Eligibility](#)

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