



**Additional information for
examiners appointed to report on
applications for the degree of

Master of Philosophy**

Regulations for the award of MPhil

The [Ordinances, Regulations and Programmes of Study for Research Degrees](#)¹ detail the formal regulations and requirements for all of the University's research degrees. The Learning Outcomes are attached. Examiners appointed to examine a practice-led research degree submission should refer to the relevant regulations for the award of a practice-led research degree (see enclosed).

To qualify for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy, each candidate must meet the required learning outcomes and satisfy the examiners that his/her achievement is of sufficient merit and that his/her thesis contains an independent contribution to knowledge and scholarship and material at a level suitable for publication² through:

- (a) presenting a thesis or alternative form of thesis as prescribed under regulation 36 on the subject of his/her advanced study and research, *and*
- (b) presenting him/herself for an oral examination and such other tests as the examiners may prescribe.

Examiners appointed to examine a practice-led research degree submission should refer to the relevant regulations for the award of a practice-led MPhil (see separate instructions enclosed).

Types of Recommendation

Examiners are asked to submit **one** of the following recommendations:

- (a) that the degree of MPhil be awarded with distinction
- (b) that the degree of MPhil be awarded with distinction, subject to editorial and presentational corrections
- (c) that the degree of MPhil be awarded
- (d) that the degree of MPhil be awarded subject to editorial and presentational corrections
- (e) that the degree of MPhil be awarded subject to the correction of minor deficiencies
- (f) that the application be referred for resubmission for the degree of MPhil
- (g) that no research degree be awarded

Award with distinction

Where the work is of exceptional merit the degree of Master of Philosophy may be awarded with distinction. In order to recommend the award of the degree with distinction the Examiners must be convinced that a significant proportion of the thesis is of a superior quality to the normal

¹ Ordinance X (Research Degrees) http://ses.leeds.ac.uk/info/22168/student_support-related_policies/646/ordinances

² The Examinations Group has provided further clarification on the distinction between the publication requirements at doctoral and Masters level which is provided in the separate Instructions to Examiners

standards required for the award of the degree. The reasons for the award of a distinction must be clearly explained.

Examiners may recommend the award of the degree of MPhil with distinction, subject to completion of editorial and presentational corrections, but only where the corrections required are of a very minor typographical nature and do not detract in any way from the research achievement. When making this recommendation, the Examiners are asked to confirm that the required editorial and presentational corrections are very minor in nature and do not compromise the academic achievement of the work.

Examiners may **not** recommend the award of the degree of MPhil with distinction, subject to completion of minor deficiencies.

Examiners may **not** recommend the award of the degree of MPhil with distinction following resubmission after referral.

Learning outcomes

The University's learning outcomes/level indicators for its different academic awards have been developed in the expectation that the learning outcomes will be achieved irrespective of the manner and location of the research and/or delivery of the programme followed by the students concerned. These general statements will be subject to continuous review by the Graduate Board.

Achievement is assessed by the examination of the thesis and performance under oral examination. However, examiners will not be expected to monitor/assess all the Learning Outcomes at the time of the viva. The main emphasis of the viva will be upon the research achievement and it may be difficult at that stage to assess expertise in 'generic and subject/professional skills'. Instead, an ongoing process of monitoring and evaluation should be recorded within the Faculty/School (in the University's system for maintaining a record of the research degree candidature). Within three months of the commencement of study the University requires a training needs analysis to be conducted, and a training plan to be agreed between the PGR and the Supervisor(s). The PGR's progress against the training plan is then reviewed regularly. Examiners may ask that the School make available these records at the viva to enable them to audit the arrangements that have been made. This will typically include the training plan, training record and any relevant extracts from the progress reports where progress with the agreed training plan is reviewed. Examiners are not required to comment on achievement against the learning outcomes as part of their report form, although comments are invited.

For PGRs commencing study before 01 September 2011 the University learning outcomes reflected the then RCUK Joint Statement of Skills for postgraduate research students (JSS). The JSS was subsequently superseded by the Researcher Development Framework (RDF). The RDF incorporates the content of the JSS but also expands the statement to cover researcher skills and attributes from postgraduate researcher through to senior academic. The introduction of the RDF led to some minor modification of the University learning outcomes. Reflecting that there are still pre-2011 candidates registered at the University both pre and post 2011 learning outcomes are included here. Although the learning outcomes are ostensibly the same, examiners should refer to the learning outcomes appropriate for the registration date of the PGR (the Internal Examiner can check this in GRAD).

For candidates commencing study in or after 01 September 2012

1. Learning Outcomes

On completion of the research programme students should have shown evidence of being able:

- to interpret and communicate knowledge in their discipline through originality in their application of knowledge and a practical understanding of established techniques of research at a level suitable for publication in reputable journals/publications as appropriate to the field of research;
- to present and defend research outcomes much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of a discipline or area of professional/clinical practice;
- to demonstrate an independent and comprehensive contribution to knowledge in the subject area and expertise in generic and subject/professional skills;
- to take a proactive and self-reflective role in working and to develop professional relationships with others where appropriate;
- to formulate ideas and hypotheses proactively and to design, develop, implement and execute plans by which to evaluate these;
- to critically evaluate current issues, research and advanced scholarship in the discipline;
- to demonstrate knowledge of and be able to critically assess, analyse and engage with the ethical and legal context of their research and any ethical and legal implications of their research.

2. Transferable (key) skills

Students will have had the opportunity to acquire the following abilities through the research training and research specified for the programme

- the skills necessary to undertake research at a higher level, for a future career as a researcher and/or for employment in a higher capacity in industry or area of professional/clinical practice;
- evaluating their own achievement and that of others;
- self-direction and effective decision making in complex and unpredictable situations;
- independent learning and the ability to work in a way which ensures continuing professional development.

3. Learning Context

For *MPhil* students the learning context will include the critical analysis of, and decision making in, complex and unpredictable situations. The structure of the programme will provide research training, breadth and/or depth of study and opportunities for drawing upon appropriate resources and techniques. Opportunities will be provided for students to develop:

- interests and informed opinions
- their involvement in the design and management of their learning activities
- their communication of their conclusions;
- their ability to undertake critical analysis

Students will be expected to progress to fully autonomous study and work.

4. Assessment

Achievement will be assessed by the examination of the candidate's thesis² and performance under oral examination and will involve the achievement of the candidate in:

- evidencing an ability to conduct independent broad and/or in-depth enquiry within different aspects of the discipline which leads to the production of material at a level suitable for publication;
- drawing on, and selecting appropriately from, a range of research techniques and methodologies in their enquiries into the discipline;
- demonstrating the ability to apply breadth and/or depth of knowledge to a complex specialist area;
- drawing on a range of perspectives on an area of study;
- evaluating and criticising received opinion;
- making reasoned judgements whilst understanding the limitations on judgements made in the absence of complete data
- the written style and overall presentation of the thesis

For candidates commencing study between 01 September 2011 & 01 August 2012

1. Learning Outcomes

On completion of the research programme students should have shown evidence of being able:

- to interpret and communicate knowledge in their discipline through originality in their application of knowledge and a practical understanding of established techniques of research;
- to present and defend research outcomes much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of a discipline or area of professional/clinical practice;
- to demonstrate a comprehensive knowledge of the subject area and expertise in generic and subject/professional skills;
- to take a proactive and self-reflective role in working and to develop professional relationships with others where appropriate;
- to convey ideas and hypotheses proactively and to design, develop, implement and execute plans by which to evaluate these;
- to critically evaluate current issues, research and advanced scholarship in the discipline;
- to demonstrate knowledge of and be able to critically assess, analyse and engage with the ethical and legal context of their research and any ethical and legal implications of their research.

2. Transferable (key) skills

Students will have had the opportunity to acquire the following abilities through the research training and research specified for the programme

- the skills necessary to undertake research at a higher level, for a future career as a researcher and/or for employment in a higher capacity in industry or area of professional/clinical practice;
- evaluating their own achievement and that of others;
- self-direction and effective decision making in complex and unpredictable situations;
- independent learning and the ability to work in a way which ensures continuing professional development.

3. Learning Context

For *MPhil* students the learning context will include the critical analysis of, and decision making in, complex and unpredictable situations. The structure of the programme will provide research training, breadth and/or depth of study and opportunities for drawing upon appropriate resources and techniques. Opportunities will be provided for students to develop:

- interests and informed opinions
- their involvement in the design and management of their learning activities
- their communication of their conclusions;
- their ability to undertake critical analysis

Students will be expected to progress to fully autonomous study and work.

4. Assessment

Achievement will be assessed by the examination of the candidate's thesis and performance under oral examination and will involve the achievement of the candidate in:

- evidencing an ability to conduct independent broad and/or in-depth enquiry within different aspects of the discipline which leads to the production of material at a level suitable for publication;
- drawing on, and selecting appropriately from, a range of research techniques and methodologies in their enquiries into the discipline;
- demonstrating the ability to apply breadth and/or depth of knowledge to a complex specialist area;
- drawing on a range of perspectives on an area of study;
- evaluating and criticising received opinion;
- making reasoned judgements whilst understanding the limitations on judgements made in the absence of complete data
- the written style and overall presentation of the thesis.

For candidates commencing study before 01 September 2011

Learning Outcomes: MPhil

On completion of the research programme students should have shown evidence of being able:

- to interpret and communicate knowledge through research and/or scholarship of publishable quality which would satisfy peer review;
- to present and defend research outcomes which extend the forefront of a discipline or area of professional/clinical practice;
- to demonstrate a systematic knowledge of the subject area and expertise in generic and subject/professional skills;
- to take a proactive and self reflective role in working and to develop professional relationships with others where appropriate;
- to formulate ideas and hypotheses proactively and to design, develop, implement and execute plans by which to evaluate these;
- to critically evaluate current issues, research and advanced scholarship in the discipline.

Transferable (key) skills: MPhil

Students will have had the opportunity to acquire the following abilities through the research training and research specified for the programme

- the skills necessary to undertake research at a higher level, for a future career as a researcher and/or for employment in a higher capacity in industry or area of professional/clinical practice;
- evaluating their own achievement and that of others;
- self-direction and effective decision making in complex and unpredictable situations;
- independent learning and the ability to work in a way which ensures continuing professional development.

Learning context: MPhil

For MPhil students the learning context will include the critical analysis of, and decision making in, complex and unpredictable situations. The structure of the programme will provide research training, breadth and/or depth of study and opportunities for drawing upon appropriate resources and techniques. Opportunities will be provided for students to develop:

- interests and informed opinions
- their involvement in the design and management of their learning activities
- their communication of their conclusions;
- their ability to undertake critical analysis

Students will be expected to progress to fully autonomous study and work.

Assessment: MPhil

Achievement will be assessed by the examination of the candidate's thesis and performance under oral examination and will involve the achievement of the candidate in:

- evidencing an ability to conduct independent broad and/or in-depth enquiry within different aspects of the discipline which leads to the production of material at a level suitable for publication;
- drawing on, and selecting appropriately from, a range of research techniques and methodologies in their enquiries into the discipline;
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- the written style and overall presentation of the thesis.