

## The Research Degree Examination

### (1) Appointment of Examiners

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Research degree examiners must be approved by the Research Degrees Committee, 46 months before the candidate expects to submit their thesis. Under no circumstances should candidates be asked to identify or contact prospective examiners.

- a) Examiners for MPhil, PhD and DProf degree candidates

The length of an RVC DProf thesis should be no more than 30,000 words (excluding title, figures, tables, appendices and references). Theses which are largely social science based may, with prior agreement, be no more than 45,000 words.

Appendices should only include material which the examiners are not required to read in order to examine the thesis (but to which they may refer if they wish).

These are upper limits and not targets. Candidates should consult with their supervisor(s) about the length of thesis that is appropriate for each particular research topic and be mindful that brevity without sacrifice of clarity will be appreciated by examiners.

Except as stated above for some DProf thesis, extensions to the word limit will not be permitted.

## (b) Content and Structure

### (i) PhD thesis

The scope of the thesis should be what might reasonably be expected after 3, or at most 4 years of full time study. It must:

- x Be written in English to a satisfactory literary standard and bound in accordance with RVC regulations.
- x Consist of the candidate's own account of their investigations, the greater proportion of which shall have been undertaken during the period of registration under supervision for the degree.

[The part played by the candidate in any work done jointly with the supervisor(s) and/or fellow researcher workers must be clearly stated by the candidate and certified by the supervisor.]

- x Form a distinct contribution to knowledge in the field and afford evidence of originality shown by the discovery of new facts and/or the exercise of independent critical power.
- x Indicate in what respect the described studies have advanced the subject.
- x Not contain work already submitted for another degree but may contain data obtained in conjunction with a supervisor or fellow researchers, provided that the candidate clearly states their personal role in the investigation and the statement is testified by the supervisor.

[Work already published, including work published in joint names, may be included only if it is adapted to form an integral part of the thesis and thereby makes a relevant contribution to the main theme of the thesis. A series of publications done is not acceptable as a thesis. Publications may be bound at the back of the thesis as supplementary material.]

- x Give a critical assessment of the literature, describe the methods of research and its findings, include discussion of those findings and indicate in what respects they appear to the

- x Be of a standard to merit publication in whole or in part or in a revised form (for example as a monograph or a number of articles in peer-reviewed journals).

(ii) MPhil Thesis

The scope of an MPhil thesis should be what might reason

A PDF copy of the thesis should either be given, or sent by e-mail, to the Research Degrees Officer (currently Lisa Matamala-Shaw [lshaw@rvc.ac.uk](mailto:lshaw@rvc.ac.uk)) at the time of submission or just before. This will be run through Turnitin (plagiarism software).

Whenever possible, candidates should take their thesis to the Graduate School in Camden in person. Along with their thesis, they must submit the Consent to Publish and Declaration of Word forms. These are available on the Graduate School site on RVC Learn.

The Research Degrees Officer will send the thesis to the examiners and will work with the supervisor to arrange a date for the viva (oral examination) with the examiners. The supervisor is responsible for arranging the room booking, notifying any others concerned, and ordering appropriate refreshments.

(4) Examination of the Thesis

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## Examination outcomes

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To determine the result of a PhD examination, examiners can recommend that:

1. The Candidate be awarded the degree of PhD

- a. The candidate be awarded the degree of Doctor of Philosophy without further work.
- b. The candidate be awarded the degree of Doctor of Philosophy subject to minor amendments to the text made within 3 months and to the satisfaction of the internal examiner.

2. The Candidate be permitted to re-submit for the degree of PhD

- a. The candidate must make major amendments to the satisfaction of the examiners and re-submit the revised thesis within 6 months without a further oral examination.
- b. The candidate has failed to satisfy the examiners at the oral examination but will be





Overview of the Examination Process

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