



## Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis

<b>Date approved:</b>	04/03/2016	<b>Date regulations will take effect:</b>	30/09/2016	<b>Date of Next Review:</b>	29/05/2018
<b>Approving Authority:</b>	DkIT Academic Council				
<b>Responsibility:</b>	Registrar's Office, Research Office, Schools				
<b>Consultation undertaken:</b>	DkIT Research Sub-committee				
<b>Supporting documents, procedures &amp; forms of this policy:</b>					
<b>Reference(s)</b>					
<b>Audience:</b>	Public – accessible to anyone				
<b>Category:</b>	Research and Research Training				

## 1 Version Control and Change History

Version Control	Date Effective	Approved By	Amendment(s)
1	21/02/2008	Academic Council (AC:DOC:100:09:01)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regulations for the Degree of PhD Adopted</li> </ul>
2	20/06/2008	Academic Council (AC:DOC:102:06:01)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regulations for Masters Awards Adopted</li> </ul>
3	20/06/2012	Academic Council (AC:DOC:127:11:01)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regulations for the Degree of PhD and Regulations for Masters Awards merged into one document</li> </ul>
4	20/02/2015	Academic Council (AC:DOC:140S:02:01)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete replacement. Regulations aligned with Dublin City University's (DCU) regulations following the establishment of the DCU-DkIT Graduate School (linked provider requirements).</li> </ul>
5	29/05/2014	Academic Council (AC:DOC: 142:03:01)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regulations updated following feedback received from Dublin City University (DCU).</li> </ul>
6	04/03/2016	Academic Council (AC:DOC: 146:05:01, AC:DOC: 146:05:02)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supervisor advisor and independent panel member requirements and responsibilities amended.</li> </ul>
7	30/09/2016	Academic Council (AC:DOC:149:16:01)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regulations amended to incorporate changes to formats of PhD submissions in Creative/Performance Practice and Artefacts</li> </ul>

## Contents

1	Version Control and Change History .....	2
2	Purpose of Regulations.....	5
3	Application and Scope.....	5
4	Principles .....	5

	Doctoral Awards.....	5
	Doctor of Philosophy – Traditional Model .....	5
	Doctor of Philosophy – Structured Model .....	6
	Doctor of Philosophy –Collaboration with Enterprise Model .....	6
	Formats of PhD Submission - Monograph, Publication or Portfolio/Composition/Performance .....	7
	Master’s Degree by Research .....	26
5	General Regulations.....	8
6	Qualification Requirements.....	9
7	Application and Registration Procedures .....	10
8	Period of Time for Completion of Research Programmes .....	10
9	Deferral/Withdrawal .....	11
10	Supervision of Programmes of Research.....	12
	Principal Supervisors(s) .....	13
	Secondary Supervisor(s).....	14
	Independent Paenl Member and Supervisor Adviser.....	16
	Supervisors will be appropriately qualified.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
11	Assessment Procedures .....	20
	Annual Progression.....	20
	Assessment for Confirmation on, or Transfer to the PhD Register .....	20
	Notice of Intention to Submit for Examination .....	22
	Assessment Processes for Candidates for a Research Degree .....	22
	Graduate Research Examination Board for Research Degrees.....	23
	Approval of Awards by Academic Council .....	23
12	Thesis Format.....	24
	PhD Thesis (Monograph).....	24
	PhD by Publication .....	25
	PhD by Portfolio/Composition .....	25
	Professional Doctoral Thesis.....	26
	Research Master’s Thesis.....	26
	Thesis Submission Procedure.....	27
	Thesis Ownership and Access.....	27

	Thesis Design and Layout.....	28
13	Appointment of Examiners for Research Degrees .....	30
	Selection and Nomination of Internal Examiners .....	30
	Selection and Nomination of External Examiners .....	31
	Appointment and Examination Procedures .....	32
14	Examination of Master's, PhD Degrees by Research .....	33
	Internal and External Examiners.....	33
	Examination of the Thesis .....	33
	Viva Voce Examination .....	34
	Examiners' Reports and Recommendations .....	35
	Remit of the Independent Chairperson.....	36
	Procedure after Examination .....	37
15	Graduate Research Examination Board for Research Degrees.....	38
	Establishment of Examination Board .....	38
	Scheduling of Examination Board .....	38
	Remit of Examination Board .....	38
	Documentation for Examination Boards.....	39
16	Appeals.....	39
	Submission .....	39
	Appeals Committee .....	39
	Grounds for Appeal .....	40
	Outcome of an Appeal .....	40
	Appendix 1: Music, Composition and Performance.....	41
	PhD and Masters by Research by research in Music.....	41
	Areas of Research in Music include: .....	41

## 2 Purpose of Regulations

1. This document describes DkIT's regulations in relation to postgraduate research degree awards.

## 3 Application and Scope

1. The regulations set out in this document apply to all DkIT staff, learners and researchers involved with postgraduate research degrees.

## 4 Principles

1. Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research and Thesis relate to the research degree offerings of Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT / "the Institute" as a linked provider of Dublin City University (DCU / "the University") research Master's and Doctoral programmes, where DCU is the Designated Awarding Body as defined in the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act (2012). They are designed to safeguard both the academic standards of the Institute and the University and the interests of individual students.
2. These regulations apply to Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) awards offered by DkIT. In addition to offering doctoral awards, the Institute offers awards at Master's level on the basis of research, and these are also subject to these regulations.
3. These regulations are guided by the Marks and Standards of DkIT and DCU; the Irish Universities Quality Board's 'Good Practice in the Organisation of PhD Programmes in Irish Higher Education', 2nd edition (2009); the 'Irish Universities' PhD Graduates Skills' statement (2014), and the Irish Universities' definition of a structured PhD as approved by the Irish Universities Association (2009).
4. These regulations are subject to change. In any given academic session, a student is subject to the regulations that are in place at the beginning of that academic session

### Doctoral Awards

5. The doctoral degree is one of the highest academic qualifications offered by DkIT and is at Level 10 on the National Framework of Qualifications. It is awarded, without classification, to successful candidates on the strength of a body of original work of scholarship prepared and presented in accordance with internationally-accepted academic standards. All candidates for doctoral degrees will be examined in the same manner through external and internal examination of the submitted thesis, followed by a viva voce examination.
6. The PhD may vary in model and in format of submission, as outlined in section 2.20 However, the same academic standards apply in all cases.

### Doctor of Philosophy – Traditional Model

7. The degree of PhD is awarded, without classification, on the basis of a thesis submitted for examination. The thesis has a nominal value of 270 ECTS credits.
8. DkIT is committed to providing its research students with the best possible research experience. In that context, it is very supportive of research students engaged in the traditional mode of PhD research who wish to take additional courses to enhance their generic and disciplinary research skills. Students registered under this model can take a maximum of 30 additional ECTS credits by means of discipline-specific

modules, generic research and transferable skills, and active contribution to the research community. Students who opt to take such modules must have the permission of their supervisors. The successful completion of such modules will be recorded on the student's transcript. All module descriptors relating to modules not already accredited as part of an award programme are subject to accreditation by the DCU Graduate Research Studies Board, following recommendation by the DkIT Graduate Research Studies Board. Results of modules will be reviewed and approved by DkIT's Graduate Research Examination Board.

### **Doctor of Philosophy – Structured Model**

9. The core component of a structured PhD programme is the advancement of knowledge through original research. At the same time, the structured PhD is designed to meet the needs of an employment market that is wider than academia. In that context, the structured PhD involves a high-quality research experience, training and output consistent with international norms and best practice.
10. To support the original research activity, the following elements are also included:
  - a formalised integrated programme of education, training, and personal and professional development activities which is planned and often thematically focused;
  - the development of discipline-specific knowledge, research skills and generic/ transferable skills; and
  - A declared outcomes and graduate attributes in line with national and international best practice.
11. Progress to completion can be formally monitored against the structured elements outlined above and supported by formal institutional arrangements.
12. Successful completion and examination of the research thesis is the basis for the award of the PhD degree.
13. Candidates who wish to pursue a structured PhD programme will undertake discipline-specific modules, research skills courses, and generic and transferable skills courses, as agreed in their Personal Development Plan (PDP), to the value of at least 20 ECTS credits, no more than 90 ECTS credits, but typically in the range 30-60 ECTS credits. Normally, 10 ECTS credits will relate to research skills, transferable and generic skills modules.
14. All module descriptors relating to modules not already accredited as part of an award programme are subject to accreditation by the DCU Graduate Research Studies Board, following recommendation by the DkIT Graduate Research Studies Board. Results of modules will be reviewed and approved by DkIT's Graduate Research Examination Board.

### **Doctor of Philosophy –Collaboration with Enterprise Model**

15. DkIT recognises the value of PhD-level research which emerges from or is conducted within the context of a company, healthcare setting, voluntary sector organisation, public body or other such organisation. Such collaborative research facilitates the professional development of the PhD student through the integration of academia with other sectors and contributes to the creation of new knowledge relevant to the

needs of society, the economy and policy-forming bodies, through original research. The educational outcomes must, in all cases, correspond to the intellectual challenge of a PhD, so the project must be carefully planned and negotiated to ensure that this potential exists.

16. The degree of PhD is awarded, without classification, on the basis of a thesis submitted for examination. The thesis has a nominal value of 270 ECTS credits.
17. At the time of initial registration, it is the principal supervisor's responsibility, in consultation with the Research Office and the Technology Transfer Office, to ensure that an agreement between the external organisation and the Institute and/or University is put in place which covers such issues as: funding, intellectual property ownership, time which the research student will spend on campus or in the external organisation and the role of the external organisation in the supervision of the student. It is also important that the expectations of both the Institute and the University regarding research awards are made clear to the collaborating enterprise.
18. Students registered under this model can take a maximum of 30 additional ECTS credits by means of discipline-specific modules, generic research and transferable skills, and active contribution to the research community. Students who opt to take such modules must have the permission of their supervisors. The successful completion of such modules will be recorded on the student's transcript. All module descriptors relating to modules not already accredited as part of an award programme are subject to accreditation by the DCU Graduate Research Studies Board, following recommendation by the DkIT Graduate Research Studies Board. Results of modules will be reviewed and approved by DkIT's Graduate Research Examination Board.

**Formats of PhD Submission: Monograph, Publication, Artefact and Creative/Performance Practice.**

19. As well as the more traditional monograph, the Institute offers the opportunity for candidates to submit their research for the award of PhD in the format of published work, of artefacts such as music compositions, and through creative or performance practice. In the case of formats other than a monograph, the submission of a substantial accompanying document which must satisfy the appointed examiners is also required. In each case, the degree of PhD is awarded in recognition of research which has made a significant and coherent contribution to knowledge. Specific requirements for each format are given in section 9 of these regulations. See also Appendix 2 and 3 for the associated guidelines for candidates, supervisors, supervisors and examiners on the format of such PhDs.
20. The Master's degree by Research, (Level 9 on the National Framework of Qualifications) is awarded, without classification, on the basis of a thesis submitted for examination. It normally has a value of 180 ECTS credits. Master's students may register for a maximum of 20 ECTS credits of discipline-specific modules, research skills courses or generic skills courses. The Master's degree can be undertaken in the context of collaboration with enterprise. In these cases, it is the supervisor's responsibility at the time of initial registration to ensure that an agreement between the external organisation and the Institute and/or University is put in place which covers such issues as: funding, intellectual property ownership, time which the research student will spend on campus or in the organisation and the role of the organisation in the supervision of the student.

21. Examination will take place through internal and external examination of the submitted thesis. A viva voce examination is not mandatory but can be requested by the examiners.
22. The following awards may be made:
  - LLM Master of Laws
  - MA Master of Arts
  - MBS Master of Business Studies
  - MEng Master of Engineering
  - MEd Master of Education Studies
  - MPhil Master of Philosophy.
  - MSc Master of Science

## 5 General Regulations

1. DCU Academic Council has overall responsibility in all matters related to its graduate research degrees.
2. The DkIT Graduate Research Studies Board oversees the implementation of policies and procedures relating to graduate research awards and reports as appropriate to DCU Academic Council on these matters.
3. DkIT is prepared to consider proposals for programmes of graduate research work concerned with fundamental research or other areas of scholarship or with any aspects of industrial, commercial, enterprise, clinical, artistic or professional activity.
4. Students registered for graduate research degree programmes through DkIT are entitled to the same rights and privileges as all other registered students at DkIT and are subject to the same Student Code of Conduct. Students must comply with DkIT regulations governing graduate research degrees and are obliged to adhere to the Institute's Ethics Policy and Academic Integrity Policy
5. A student may be registered at any time for one degree only, and work to be submitted for an award cannot be submitted elsewhere for a degree or other similar award.
6. Each student must register with DkIT, and his/her registration will be assigned to a single School, notwithstanding the fact that he/she may conduct the research across a number of Schools or in one or more Institute Research Centres.
7. In the case of interdisciplinary research projects, the School assuming responsibility for the project must be the School to which the student is assigned.
8. DkIT encourages collaboration in programmes of research between the Institute and other educational, industrial, commercial, professional or research institutions. Such arrangements are governed by the regulations, including those outlined in Sections 6.5 and 6.6.
9. All official communications and administrative procedures relating to graduate research applications, offers of places, registration, continued registration, annual progress reports, examination procedures and results shall be conducted through and by DkIT's Registrar's Office.

## 6 Qualification Requirements

1. Prior to submitting an application, a candidate must consult with the appropriate School on the proposed programme of study and must ascertain whether or not the School would be prepared to recommend his/her application to DkIT.
2. To register for a graduate research programme, a candidate must normally have obtained a primary degree classification (Level 8) equivalent to a second-class honours degree, grade two, from an approved university or an approved equivalent degree-awarding body, or have an approved equivalent professional qualification in an area cognate to the proposed research topic. Such candidates are considered for entry only on the research Master's register initially.
3. Candidates with a taught Master's degree (Level 9) in an appropriate discipline with first- or second-class honours, and candidates with a primary degree in an appropriate discipline with first or second-class honours, grade one, may apply and be considered for entry to the PhD-track register with a view to proceeding towards a PhD. Such candidates will undergo a confirmation procedure, as outlined in section 11, before being admitted to the PhD register.
4. Students on the Master's register may apply for transfer to the PhD register under the same conditions, and using the same procedure, as PhD-track candidates requesting confirmation on the PhD register.
5. Candidates holding an appropriate Master's degree obtained by research may apply for direct entry to the PhD register to conduct research in a cognate area.
6. In exceptional circumstances only, candidates for a Master's degree who do not meet the stipulated entry requirements but who can demonstrate exceptional ability or aptitude for academic research may apply to pursue studies for a research degree. They may base their application on recognition of their accredited or experiential prior learning, in line with Institute policies in this regard.
7. Such candidates may be recommended for acceptance by the DkIT Graduate Research Studies Board without a stipulation that qualifying taught modules first be undertaken; alternatively, one or more qualifying modules may be stipulated. The admission of candidates not holding a prior degree qualification cognate to the area of research being undertaken shall be strictly limited and applicable in exceptional cases only. Such applications must be fully supported and endorsed by the School in which the research will be carried out and supervised. The onus will be on the School and the supervisor to give clear reasons for their recommendation in such a case, and the DCU Graduate Research Studies Board will make the final decision on admission based on the recommendation of the DkIT Graduate Research Studies Board.
8. Students holding academic qualifications from outside the State will be assessed using the NARIC guidelines and the European Framework of Qualifications.
9. Students, whose first language is not English, must demonstrate a recent (within 12 months) minimum proficiency in English at 6.5 (or greater if considered necessary by the Graduate Research Programme Board) on the IELTS scale or equivalent in order to ensure that there is no language barrier between research student and supervisor, which might hinder the research activity at the outset, and that the student is capable of providing written work, as and when required.

10. Students, whose first language is not English, but who have attained their primary degree through the medium of English, are not subject to the above requirement

## **7 Application and Registration Procedures**

1. Candidates must apply to DkIT using the Institute Postgraduate Research Application Form. Only candidates who have contacted the School, with which they wish to be registered, and have got a recommendation from the School to apply, will be able to proceed to the completion of the postgraduate research application.
2. Successful candidates will be required to register with DkIT and pay the appropriate fees before beginning their research studies. Neither DkIT nor DCU holds any responsibility for, nor are they liable for any action or actions arising from research work undertaken before registration
3. All students are required to re-register on an annual basis. Such registration is subject to payment of the appropriate fees and satisfactory progress certified by the supervisory panel (described in 10.1) and endorsed by the appropriate Graduate Research Programme Board.
4. Supervisors, on behalf of registered students, or new applicants not covered by a joint supervision agreement or joint award agreement but wishing to reside and undertake research outside Ireland or the Institute for a period of six months or more, must receive the express written permission of the DkIT Graduate Research Studies Board, after first providing details of the rationale for registration in DkIT rather than locally, and arrangements for supervisor oversight of the field, experimental or other work.
5. A collaborative agreement is required in cases where doctoral or Master's research is to be conducted in formal collaboration with another external organisation (i.e. higher education institution, research institute, private body). A formal co-supervision arrangement is entered into in cases where the student will spend more than 1 month in an academic year in the partner institution or company. The context should be made clear at the time of the student's application to DkIT so that the agreement can be drawn up by DkIT with the partner institution or company prior to registration. Significant advance planning is usually required.
6. The collaborative agreement shall cover the subject of the research, a schedule of time at each institution, supervisory arrangements, material costs, administration of funding, fees, and insurance. This agreement shall be signed by the relevant Head of School in DkIT or nominee, and by the DkIT Head of Research and Graduate Studies if part of a funded collaborative programme. IP ownership shall be covered by a separate agreement which will be developed in collaboration with the Institute's Technology Transfer Office.

## **8 Period of Time for Completion of Research Programmes**

1. Students register on either a full-time or a part-time basis.
2. The minimum typical and maximum registration periods for PhD and Research Master's degrees are as follows:

	<b>Minimum Registration Period</b>	<b>Typical Registration Period</b>	<b>Maximum Registration Period</b>
PhD (full time)	3 years	4 years	5 years
PhD (part time)	5 years	6 years	7 years
Research Master's (full time)	2 years	2 years	3 years
Research Master's (part time)	3 years	3-4 years	5 years

3. If a student wishes to submit a thesis before the minimum period stipulated, he/she must seek permission from the DCU Graduate Research Studies Board through the DkIT Graduate Research Studies Board and the relevant Graduate Research Programme Board, to be allowed to do so. Such permission will be granted in exceptional cases only.
4. If a student does not complete a thesis within the maximum period stipulated, he/she must seek permission from the DCU Graduate Research Studies Board to be allowed to continue his/her studies. Such extensions will be granted in exceptional cases only.
5. The registration date for autumn registration is published in the Academic Calendar.
6. The Spring registration date is the 2nd March, for Year 1 students only. Students who register on or after this date must re-register for Year 1 in the following September. (Students should check these dates regularly in case of changes.)

## 9 Deferral/Withdrawal

1. It is preferable for students to conduct their research without interruption in so far as possible. Occasionally, a student may have reason to be absent from the Institute. If this is for a period of less than three months no change to registration is required, and regular fee liability applies.
2. In some circumstances, for example in the case of illness, or financial or family circumstances, it is possible to apply for a formal temporary cessation of registration until the difficulties have been resolved. Deferrals should normally be granted in keeping with DkIT Marks and Standards, and only in such exceptional circumstances. Deferrals must be approved by the Supervisor and the relevant Head of School and will usually be for one half (6 months), or one full (12 months) academic year.
3. Students wishing to defer must notify the Registrar's Office, in advance of the deferral, in writing by completing and submitting an Application for Deferral. Retrospective deferrals are not allowed, except in exceptional cases where a student was unable to disclose circumstances, and is limited to half-year deferral.
4. During any temporary cessation of registration, the student's participation in the research programme is suspended and the student will not be entitled to supervision or to use the Institute facilities, including the Library.

5. The minimum period of registration is extended by a period corresponding to the deferred period. Consistent with DkIT Marks and Standards, the maximum period of registration is not extended.
6. Tuition fees are adjusted to account for the deferred period.
7. When a student is externally funded, he/she should discuss the situation with the Supervisor(s) in the first instance, and the sponsoring agency should be consulted if a temporary cessation of study is necessary. Students and supervisors should be aware of any possible implications which this temporary cessation may have on the funding and of any additional requirements stipulated by the funding body. Students who defer do not receive a stipend during this period, as stipends are paid only during active registration. The Research Office should be notified prior to the student seeking a deferral from the Institute.

## 10 Supervision of Programmes of Research

1. Each graduate research student will have a supervisory panel. The principal aim of the supervisory panel is to participate in formal decision-making with respect to the student's progress, and provide advice, additional support and pastoral care, and escalate, as appropriate, should problems arise.
2. The supervisory panel will comprise of at least 2 supervisors which can include two principal supervisors or one principal and one secondary supervisor, plus one additional independent panel member who should be a DkIT academic staff member. A supervisor advisor (a mentoring supervisor) may also be appointed who could fulfil the role of the independent panel member (see section 10.18 below). The principal or secondary supervisor must be an academic staff member from the academic School in which the student is registered. Graduate Research Programme Boards should endeavour to ensure that a supervisory panel has no more than four members in total. Appointment of too many supervisors for one candidate is to be avoided, and each supervisor should have a defined and clear role in the work (assisting students in a laboratory for instance does not, of itself, constitute supervising).
3. While a Supervisor will be an expert in the field of study, there is no requirement that all members of the supervisory panel have this expertise, but they should have some experience of research degree supervision in a similar or related discipline.
4. The supervisory panels for the first two students of any academic new to being a principal supervisor must include a member experienced in supervision who will be in a position to take the role of the supervisor advisor<sup>1</sup>. Inclusion of such a panel member can be deemed necessary by the Chair of the relevant Graduate Research Programme Board for reasons other than a principal supervisor's relative inexperience. These first two students associated with the principal supervisor new to supervision, are not required to have completed their programme of study but must have successfully progressed.

---

<sup>1</sup> This panel member must have supervised two students to completion at the level of the award being sought or at a higher level and may be a member of academic staff in another School or in DCU, or in exceptional cases, in another institution if there are not enough panel members qualified to be advisors available in a School and subject to the approval of the DkIT Graduate Research Studies Board

5. The full panel should be established before the student's registration and notified by the Chair of the Graduate Research Programme Board to the Registrar's Office.
6. Supervision remains the sole prerogative of the supervisory panel who has/have full responsibility for the overall management and supervision of the student's work and progress.
7. Schools are required to have guidelines on the ranges of frequency and durations of contact between student and research supervisors that are regarded as reasonable in the relevant discipline.

#### **Principal Supervisors(s)**

8. Each graduate research student will have at least one principal supervisor.
9. A principal supervisor should:
  - have a qualification at the level of the research award **and**
  - have relevant experience in an area cognate to the proposed area of research usually reflected by publications relating to the general area of research being undertaken by the candidate **and**
  - normally be a member of DkIT academic staff with a permanent contract or one which extends beyond the normal expected registration period of the candidate. If these conditions are not met, then a supervisory plan must be put in place which satisfies the relevant Graduate Research Programme Board.
10. In certain cases, where there is a significant requirement that more than one area of expertise be covered, there may be more than one principal supervisor. The supervisors in this instance are referred to as joint principal supervisors and have equal rights and undertake equal responsibilities.
11. The responsibilities of the principal supervisor(s) include the following:
  - Provide contact and guidance through regular and systematic meetings keeping records as appropriate; to request regular written submissions as appropriate and to provide constructive evaluation and criticism in reasonable time.
  - Ensure the student is registered on the Institute's Research Management system ([dkit.smartsimple.ie](http://dkit.smartsimple.ie)).
  - Meet with the candidate and other panel members at least twice a year to discuss progress.
  - Complete the formal annual progress report using the Institute's Research Management system ([dkit.smartsimple.ie](http://dkit.smartsimple.ie)) with the student (including details of the frequency of contact maintained with the candidate and an appraisal by supervisors of the progress of the work to date) and advise the Registrar's Office if the candidate is eligible to progress.
  - Decline appointment if they expect not to be able to discharge the responsibilities of supervision in full, or withdraw if circumstances change and they are no longer able to.

- Acknowledge a student's contribution in any presentation, publication or meeting which involves the student's research work.
- Undertake professional development, as appropriate, in respect of supervisory skills, particularly the Institute's Research Supervisory Training programme.
- Advise the student on the selection of the research topic.
- Ensure, at time of initial registration, that an appropriate agreement (as per the regulations) is in place where the research involves an external organisation.
- Ensure that the student acquires training in the methodology of research and scholarship and in the skills necessary for sustained independent effort by advising on their training needs analysis and their Personal Development Plan (PDP), and giving permission for registration for structured training where appropriate.
- Ensure that the student is made aware of any inadequacies of progress or standards relative to the standard expected and, where necessary, to advise on withdrawal from the programme.
- Liaise with the external supervisor of the co-operating establishment, where relevant.
- Advise on the methodology and form of presentation of the thesis and its subsequent examination.
- Consult with the Chair of the Graduate Research Programme Board on the nomination of examiners.
- Advise the student of the composition of the Examination Board for the viva voce examination, and that he/she is precluded from making direct contact with the External Examiner.
- Advise students in relevant aspects of regulations and etiquette in respect of oral examinations if relevant.
- Attend the viva voce examination unless the student requests otherwise.
- Advise on the correction and revision of the thesis following examination.
- Attend Examination Board(s) and Graduate Research Examination Board meeting at which the candidate is being considered.
- Upload the electronic copy of the final thesis (joint responsibility with student).
- Ensure any Intellectual Property issues have been discussed with the Institute's Technology Transfer Office prior to project commencement

### **Secondary Supervisor(s)**

12. In certain cases, a graduate research student may have secondary supervisor(s) as well as principal supervisor(s). A secondary supervisor is appointed when specific expert academic input is needed or been given on a significant aspect of the research

project, or when supervision is being provided by a person who is not a member of DkIT staff (e.g. DkIT retiree, researcher external to DkIT).

13. Unless subject to a joint award agreement, where a supervisor is not a member of Institute staff, such a person or persons will be deemed to be secondary supervisors and a Institute staff member will be the principal supervisor. All relevant forms must incorporate the names of all supervisors. The Institute will, however, accept the signature of the DKIT supervisor(s) as signalling assent on the part of both or all supervisors.
14. A secondary supervisor(s) should:
  - have research experience consistent with the level of the research award. A qualification at the level of the research award is not absolutely necessary.
  - be an active scholar in the area of research with the required specific expertise.
  - be internal or external to DkIT.
15. The responsibilities of the secondary supervisor(s) include the following:
  - Meet with the candidate and other panel members at least twice a year to discuss progress.
  - Complete the formal annual progress report using the Institute's Research Management system ([dkit.smartsimple.ie](http://dkit.smartsimple.ie)) with the student (including details of the frequency of contact maintained with the candidate and an appraisal by supervisors of the progress of the work to date) and advise the Registrar's Office if the candidate is eligible to progress.
  - Decline appointment if they expect not to be able to discharge the responsibilities of supervision in full, or withdraw if circumstances change and they are no longer able to.
  - Acknowledge a student's contribution in any presentation, publication or meeting which involves the student's research work.
  - Undertake professional development, as appropriate, in respect of supervisory skills, particularly the Institute's Research Supervisory Training programme.
  - Advise on relevant training in the methodology of aspects of the research and scholarship and in the skills necessary for sustained independent effort in this area.
  - Provide contact and guidance through regular and systematic meetings keeping records as appropriate; to request regular written submissions as appropriate and to provide constructive evaluation and criticism in reasonable time.
  - Ensure that the student is made aware of any inadequacies of progress or standards relative to the standard expected.
  - Advise on the methodology and form of presentation of aspects of the thesis and its subsequent examination.

- Advise on aspects of the correction and revision of the thesis following examination.

#### **Independent Panel Member and Supervisor Adviser**

16. Each graduate research student will have one independent panel member and may have a supervisor adviser. The independent supervisor cannot be either the principal supervisor or secondary supervisor.
17. The supervisor adviser should:
  - have some experience of research degree supervision at the level of the research award in a similar or related discipline. There is no requirement to be an expert in the field of study and
  - be a member of academic staff in the School in which the student is registered, if no other member of the supervisory panel is and
  - have significant experience in research degree supervision at the research award level if the principal supervisor(s) is supervising their first or second research student at the award level (or the Chair of the Graduate Research Programme Board deems it necessary to have a supervisor adviser (mentoring supervisor) in place for any reason) and no other supervisory panel member fulfils the supervisor adviser role.
18. The independent panel member should:
  - have some experience of research degree supervision at the level of the research award.
  - be a member of academic staff in the Institute but normally not in the same School as the student is registered.
19. The responsibilities of the supervisor adviser include the following:
  - Meet with the supervisor(s) and candidate (individually) at least twice a year to discuss progress.
  - Ensure that a record of such meetings is included in the formal annual progress report on the Institute's Research Management system ([dkit.smartsimple.ie](http://dkit.smartsimple.ie)) and advise the Registrar's Office through the Graduate Research Programme Board—of any concerns they may have regarding the student's progress.
  - Decline appointment if they expect not to be able to discharge the responsibilities of supervision in full, or withdraw if circumstances change and they are no longer able to.
  - Undertake professional development, as appropriate, in respect of supervisory skills, particularly the Institute's Research Supervisory Training programme.
  - Provide the supervisor with advice and support as needed.
  - Provide the student with advice and support as needed.
  - Refer to the Chair of the Graduate Research Programme Board, as appropriate, should problems arise

20. The responsibilities of the independent panel member include the following:
- Meet with the candidate at least twice a year to discuss progress.
  - Ensure that a record of such meetings is included in the formal annual progress report on the Institute's Research Management system (dkit.smartsimple.ie) and advise the Registrar's Office through the Graduate Research Programme Board—of any concerns they may have regarding the student's progress.
  - Decline appointment if they expect not to be able to discharge the responsibilities of supervision in full, or withdraw if circumstances change and they are no longer able to.
  - Undertake professional development, as appropriate, in respect of supervisory skills, particularly the Institute's Research Supervisory Training programme.
  - Provide the student with advice, additional support and pastoral care.
  - Refer to the Chair of the Graduate Research Programme Board, as appropriate, should problems arise.
21. Supervisors will be appropriately qualified.
- 21.1. Academic staff who undertake the supervision of PhD students are themselves required to hold a doctoral qualification and have relevant experience in an area cognate to the proposed area of research, usually reflected by publications relating to the general area of research being undertaken by the candidate.
- 21.2. A person who does not hold a doctoral qualification may, however, act as joint principal supervisor or secondary supervisor to a doctoral candidate provided that the other supervisor holds such an award. Such supervisors must have research experience consistent with the level of study.
- 21.3. Academic staff undertaking the supervision of research Master's students are themselves required to hold at least a Master's qualification in an area cognate to the proposed area of research. A person who does not hold a Master's qualification may, however, act as joint principal supervisor or secondary supervisor provided that the other supervisor holds such an award. Such supervisors must have research experience consistent with the level of study.
22. Members of academic staff should normally act as principal supervisor to a maximum of six research students at any one time. All cases in which the figure exceeds ten should be referred to the Chair of the relevant Graduate Research Programme Board (or the Registrar or nominee where the Chair is a supervisor) for a decision as to whether or not it is appropriate that the proposed supervisor accept an applicant. Where more than one School is involved in the process, the relevant Chair of the Graduate Research Programme Board is the Chair of the Graduate Research Programme Board of which the proposed supervisor is a member.
23. All first-time supervisors must attend the Institute's Research Supervisory Training programme during, or prior to, the first year of supervision, and all research supervisors are encouraged to attend supervisory training as part of their professional development. It will be the responsibility of the relevant Graduate

Research Programme Board to monitor progress and provide evidence of completion of the supervisory training for staff within their School.

24. It is the responsibility of the Chair of the relevant Graduate Research Programme Board to ensure that appropriate supervision remains in place in situations where a supervisor leaves the Institute.
  - 24.1. Where a principal supervisor retires or resigns from the Institute during the programme of study of one or more students, then the supervisor is encouraged to continue supervising the students in their new capacity, but as a secondary supervisor. It is the responsibility of the Chair of the relevant Graduate Research Programme Board to appoint a new principal supervisor and to notify the Registrar's Office using the Change of Supervisory Arrangements Form.
  - 24.2. Where a supervisor is absent (e.g. on sabbatical leave) for part of the duration of the student's research, it will be the responsibility of the relevant Graduate Research Programme Board to determine whether or not a replacement supervisor is needed for the period in question.
  - 24.3. It is the responsibility of the supervisor(s) to ensure a smooth and timely transition where a change of supervisor takes place.
  - 24.4. Changes in supervisory arrangements must normally be made on the basis of agreement between the supervisor(s), the student, the proposed supervisor(s) and the Chair of the relevant Graduate Research Programme Board and must be submitted to the Graduate Research Programme Board for approval and, once approved there, notified to the Registrar's Office.
  - 24.5. It is the responsibility of the supervisor(s) to ensure a smooth and timely transition where a change of supervisor takes place.
  - 24.6. Changes in supervisory arrangements must normally be made on the basis of agreement between the supervisor(s), the student, the proposed supervisor(s) and the Chair of the relevant Graduate Research Programme Board and must be submitted to that the Graduate Research Programme Board for approval and, once approved there, notified to the Registrar's Office.
25. Where a research candidate is resident outside Ireland for six months or more over the period of registration, and the registration is not subject to a co-supervision agreement or joint award agreement with an external institution, the express permission of the DkIT Graduate Research Studies Board must be obtained. In order to reach a decision on the matter, the DkIT Graduate Research Studies Board should be informed as per regulation 7.5, and the following guidelines for remote supervision should be adhered to:
  - 25.1. An agreement which incorporates the relevant regulations is written and signed by the supervisor(s), the student and the Chair of the relevant Graduate Research Programme Board.
  - 25.2. The supervisor(s) must have access to any relevant data and/or detailed information on facilities / field sites being used in the candidate's research in order to facilitate evaluation of the methodologies being used and the rigour and integrity of analysis.

- 25.3. The supervisor(s) and student need to maintain regular contact to ensure the successful supervision of the student. At a minimum an annual face-to-face meeting with the Supervisor(s) is mandatory, and either the supervisor(s) or the student may request a face-to-face meeting if they deem it necessary.
- 25.4. A mechanism for communication needs to be established and monitored carefully by the relevant Chair of the Graduate Research Programme Board. It should be ensured that all appropriate technological means are employed to facilitate the supervision process.
26. Research students and Supervisors have access to policies and procedures of the Institute<sup>2</sup>. Significant difficulties which arise within a supervisor/student relationship are dealt with in this context.
27. In the first instance, a student, supervisor(s) or other panel member should seek a resolution to the issues at School level. This process will normally involve the student, supervisor(s), panel members and relevant Chair of the Graduate Research Programme Board. The Chair may wish to seek advice on policy or procedure (without prejudicing any possible subsequent formal procedures) and/or consult with other colleagues on context and background. The resolution to the issues will be captured in writing and circulated to the student and panel members by the Chair of the Graduate Research Programme Board to ensure clarity for both student and supervisor(s).
28. If any party does not accept the resolution, or a resolution is not possible within a reasonable timeframe (3-6 weeks), consideration should be given by all parties as to how the issues fall under specific Institute policies.
29. The responsibilities of the student include the following:
- to comply with relevant DkIT regulations;
  - to complete the Postgraduate Research Agreement (either funded or non-funded) issued by the Graduate Studies Office.
  - to register on the Institute's research management system ([dkit.smartsimple.ie](http://dkit.smartsimple.ie))
  - to conduct the research within the ethical standards of the discipline(s) and in accordance with the standards detailed by the DkIT and any appropriate external agencies;
  - to undertake a periodic training needs analysis and maintain a Personal Development Plan (PDP);
  - to engage positively with opportunities for professional development; and
  - to acknowledge the supervisor's role in their research including in any presentation, publication or meeting to which the supervisor has made a contribution.

---

<sup>2</sup> All relevant DkIT policies, in force at any given time, apply.

## 11 Assessment Procedures

### Annual Progression

1. Continued registration for a higher degree is dependent on the submission of a satisfactory annual progress report. A student's progress is formally evaluated on an annual basis through the completion of an Annual Progress Report as made available through the Institute's research Management System (dkit.smartsimple.ie).
2. Evaluation of each Annual Progress Report will be carried out at School level, and will be completed by the principal supervisor(s), approved by the supervisory panel and endorsed by the relevant Graduate Research Programme Board. A copy of the report should be submitted to the Registrar's Office each year on or before the date published in the Academic Calendar. The student should retain a copy of the final electronic form.
3. In the case of a negative recommendation, the Institute will take the view that the student is unlikely to achieve the degree for which he/she is registered and he/she will not be permitted to continue as a registered graduate research student.
4. A student has the right to appeal a decision made by the Graduate Research Programme Board. The process for appealing a decision is detailed in Section 16.

### Assessment for Confirmation on, or Transfer to the PhD Register

5. Students wishing to transfer from the Master's or PhD track register to the PhD Register must make a formal application through their respective Graduate Research Programme Board to the DkIT Graduate Research Studies Board, for approval by the DCU Graduate Research Studies Board. This request can only be made following the formal recommendation from the student's supervisory panel and in consultation with their sponsoring School. Where the student has not been recommended for transfer then the student can appeal the decision through the appropriate registration appeals process.
6. Students will have to undergo this transfer procedure generally no earlier than one year after initial registration but, at most, after twenty-one months research for full-time students and at an appropriate corresponding time for part-time students.
7. All students wishing to transfer to the PhD register are required to undergo an examination process by a PhD Transfer Examination Board. This involves the following:
  - Submission of a Transfer Report (double-spaced and not normally more than 50 A4 pages in length) or an equivalent discipline-specific submission, to their Supervisory Panel. This is then reviewed by an appropriate independent external expert in the relevant field of study. The structure of the Transfer Report should be as follows:
  - Review and discussion of the research work already undertaken since initial registration, together with a comprehensive list of references.
  - An outline of the proposed PhD research project, set in the context of relevant research in the field, with appropriate targets and milestones, and a timescale for its completion.

- Statement by the supervisors confirming that they consider the candidate's proposed research programme is viable for the award of a PhD and that the candidate has made sufficient progress to justify transfer.
  - Oral Examination.
8. The supervisory panel must nominate an independent external examiner to the relevant Graduate Research Programme Board for consideration and approval. This nomination is then communicated to the DkIT Graduate Research Studies Board for approval. This nomination must be made at least 4 weeks in advance of the proposed examination process.
  9. The independent external examiner must meet the following criteria:
    - Possess a PhD or an equivalent qualification in the relevant field;
    - Have recently supervised at least one PhD graduate student to completion as the lead supervisor;
    - Be research active and possess the required expertise in the research area of the proposed confirmation request
    - This independent external examiner cannot participate in the final PhD viva voce examination
  10. The Chair of the Graduate Research Programme Board, in consultation with the supervisory panel, convenes the PhD Transfer Examination Board, which consists of:
    - Chairperson (Chair of the Graduate Research Programme Board or his/her nominee). The role of the Chairperson is to ensure that the Institute's regulations on PhD transfer are adhered to.
    - The independent external examiner
  11. The PhD Transfer Examination Board is attended by the student and the supervisory panel, if requested by the student, and the examination takes the following structure:
    - The student gives an oral presentation, which may include a practice based element, to the Examination Board describing the work presented in their Transfer Report;
    - The Examination Board then orally examines the student
  12. The role of the PhD Transfer Examination Board is to determine if the student's research programme is suitable for a PhD and to assess the student's capacity for completing the programme. The Board can recommend one of the following options:
    - Student can transfer to the PhD Register
    - Student can transfer to the PhD Register subject to clearly specified revisions to the content of the Transfer Report; these revisions to be submitted for consideration no later than three months after the original examination date.
    - The student may resubmit an updated Transfer Report, based on recommendations by the examiners, and re-present for a second examination no later than 6 months after the original examination date. This maybe the case if the examiner believes that there is real potential but

that it is not possible to make a positive recommendation at the time when transfer is originally requested.

- Student should be registered on the Master's Register and be invited to complete such research as will allow him/her to graduate with a Master's degree
13. It is possible for the PhD Transfer Examination Board to examine the student by using technological means (e.g. video conferencing or other electronic facilities), if this is more convenient for the external examiner, hence avoiding their need to travel.
  14. The application form requesting confirmation on or transfer to the PhD register should be signed by the examiner(s) and the Chair of the relevant Graduate Research Programme Board and submitted to the DkIT Graduate Research Studies Board. It should include both a report on the oral examination and a general progress report on the student's research performance (as evidenced by a substantial body of work such as a transfer report). The DCU Graduate Research Studies Board will require evidence that the student's progress to date has been satisfactory and that the programme of research envisaged provides a satisfactory basis for work at PhD level.
  15. Where the student has not been recommended for transfer by the Institute then the student can appeal the decision through the appropriate appeals process in section 16.

#### **Notice of Intention to Submit for Examination**

16. Through the principal supervisor(s), a student must provide three months' notice to the Registrar's Office of his/her intention to submit for examination. The supervisor and Chair of the relevant Graduate Research Programme Board must recommend on the Notification of Intention to Submit Thesis for Examination form the name of appropriate External and Internal Examiners for appointment by the DCU Graduate Research Studies Board.
17. Candidates should confirm the format of their submission, (see section 4.19) at this stage, and indicate whether a specific non-disclosure agreement is required. In cases of disagreement between a student and a supervisor as to the appropriateness of submitting the thesis for examination, the matter is to be referred to the Chair of the relevant Graduate Research Programme Board for resolution.

#### **Assessment Processes for Candidates for a Research Degree**

18. Candidates for a doctoral degree will be assessed on the basis of a written thesis and a viva voce examination. In the case of a practice-based award a practice-based element may be required as part of the assessment. In the case of Master's candidates, the usual expectation is that there will be no viva voce examination. However, an examiner may recommend that a viva voce examination be held.
19. Each candidate for a higher degree by research will be examined by at least one Internal Examiner and at least one External Examiner.
20. The viva voce examination shall be held at Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT) unless prior approval has been obtained from the DkIT Graduate Research Studies Board to hold it elsewhere. Where absolutely necessary, consideration may be given

to using the Institute's videoconferencing facilities for the viva voce examination. Standard procedures for conducting a viva voce using videoconferencing must be followed.

21. The proceedings of the viva voce examination shall be supervised by an Independent Chairperson (see Section 14.19). A candidate for a doctoral degree will be required to show ability to engage in original investigation or scholarship, to test ideas whether his/her own or those of others, and to understand the background and fundamental basis of the work undertaken.
22. A candidate for a Master's degree will be required to demonstrate competence in the investigation or critical study of the chosen topic and lucidity in the presentation of the results.
23. In cases where a viva voce is being held, both External and Internal Examiners should send preliminary examination reports to the Independent Chairperson of the examination panel prior to the viva voce examination. Once these are all available, the Chairperson shall arrange for copies of preliminary reports from each examiner to be exchanged among all examiners in advance of the viva voce examination, so that they are aware of one another's views.
24. In cases where no viva voce is being held, the examination reports are completed by both examiners and the Internal Examiner submits them to the Registrar's Office.
25. Following the viva voce the Internal and External Examiners shall furnish the Independent Chairperson with a joint written examination report (Examination Report for the Award of a Higher Degree (by Research) form) on the outcome of the candidate's examination for the higher degree for which he/she is registered. This form should be completed on the day or within one week of the viva voce and be submitted to Registrar's Office by the Independent Chairperson.
26. The Independent Chairperson should also make a formal report to the Chair of the relevant Graduate Research Programme Board on the quality of the examination process and on any recommendations made by the examiners in order to allow the School to get appropriate feedback on the process with a view to maintaining the overall quality of future activities.

#### **Graduate Research Examination Board for Research Degrees**

27. The Registrar's Office will make the necessary arrangements to convene a meeting of the DkIT Graduate Research Examination Board for research degrees to consider the examination reports of students who have been examined.
28. Following the meetings of the DkIT Graduate Research Examination Board, the Registrar's Office will submit to DCU Academic Council, for its approval, a composite listing of candidates recommended for awards.

#### **Approval of Awards by Academic Council**

29. All examination results and recommendations are subject to final approval and confirmation by DCU Academic Council.
30. All candidates for higher degrees shall be informed in writing by the Registrar's Office of their official position following the meeting of DCU Academic Council.

31. Re-submission by an unsuccessful candidate may take place only with the approval of DCU Academic Council on the recommendation of, and under the conditions proposed by, the Examiners and with the concurrence of the Graduate Research Examination Board for Research Degrees

## 12 Thesis Format

1. All theses submitted must conform strictly to the regulations and requirements detailed below. All doctoral theses are examined under the same conditions and through the same processes of independent examiners and a viva voce examination.
2. Formats of Research Thesis
  - 2.1. A thesis must:
    - consist of the candidate's own account of his/her research;
    - demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the field of study;
    - include critical analysis of related work;
    - in the case of a PhD thesis, constitute a significant contribution to existing academic knowledge;
    - in the case of a professional doctoral thesis, constitute a significant contribution to existing professional knowledge and practice; and
    - be based on work which has been conducted while the candidate has been registered as a research student at DkIT.

### PhD Thesis (Monograph)

3. The traditional PhD thesis presents the research undertaken by the candidate as an integrated whole. It should include:
  - an introduction;
  - abstract
  - critical analysis of existing research;
  - in-depth discussions of the methodological approach taken by the candidate;
  - presentation and critical analysis, of the findings of the research undertaken by the candidate; and
  - a substantive conclusion which indicates scope for further research arising out of the candidate's research.
4. The maximum word length, including bibliography and notes, is 90,000. Any appendices remain outside the word limit.
5. A variety of media may be used to support/inform research work - e.g. CDs, websites, photographs and emerging technologies.
6. The order in which components above are presented, and the nature of any additional written work, will vary from discipline to discipline.

7. Candidates who have pursued a structured PhD also follow this format in relation to their thesis. All candidates are encouraged to publish material in advance of presentation of the thesis, and reference should be made to any such publication in the thesis.

### **PhD by Publication**

8. Students should, ideally, indicate their intention to submit using publications at the time of application for transfer/confirmation on the PhD register but, at the latest, at the time of indicating their intention to submit for examination.
9. The PhD thesis by publication should consist of:
  - a set of published papers and/or papers accepted for publication; and
  - an accompanying document no less than 10,000 words in length which sets the papers in the context of existing literature, gives a detailed overview of the theme(s) common to all papers included in the thesis, argues the coherence of these publications, and justifies the methodology adopted. This overarching critical document should evaluate the contribution that the research in the submitted publications makes to the advancement of knowledge in the research area.
10. Only peer-reviewed book chapters or papers (published journal papers, or papers accepted for publication) in reputable peer-reviewed outputs for the discipline(s) in question should be considered for inclusion. The number of papers may vary across disciplines and also with the length of individual papers and the extent of the candidate's contribution thereto.
11. Where jointly-authored publications are included in the submission, the candidate should declare the extent to which the publication is his/her work and what his/her specific contributions were, and this should normally be certified by the supervisory panel and all authors concerned, but at least independently verified in all cases. This statement should be bound with the other submitted materials.
12. Novel contribution should normally be apparent in at least three of the papers in which the candidate is main or key contributor. Other papers with smaller or more specific contributions can also be included in the thesis, where this makes sense in terms of its overall coherence. All papers and the accompanying overview should be presented and bound (together) in accordance with the regulations in Section 12.30.

### **PhD by Artefact**

This format is restricted to candidates undertaking research in disciplines where output in forms other than a monograph (such as a music composition, critical edition, film, multimedia production etc.) are accepted internationally as evidence of scholarly achievement at the level of the research award. Specific discipline based additional admission requirements, linked to skills based competency, may apply for candidates for research projects intended to be presented in this format.

The format requires:

A substantial artefact, or portfolio of artefacts.

And

An accompanying commentary of no less than 20,000 words in length. This overarching critical document should detail the research questions addressed through the

medium of the artefact(s), sets the artefact(s) in the context of existing literature, give a detailed overview of the theme(s) common to all elements included, argue the coherence of the submission and justify the methodology adopted. It should evaluate the contribution that the research presented in the submitted artefact makes to the advancement of knowledge in the research area.

### **PhD through Creative and/or Performance Practice**

This format is restricted to candidates submitting research in forms such as music or theatre performance. Specific additional admission requirements, linked to skills based competency, will apply for candidates for research projects intended to be presented in this format.

The format requires:

A portfolio of creative or performance based elements of substantial nature,

And

An accompanying commentary of no less than 20,000 words in length. This overarching critical document should detail the research questions addressed through the medium of the creative work / performance in the context of existing practice, give a detailed overview of the theme(s) common to all elements included, argue the coherence of the submission, and justify the methodology adopted. It should evaluate the contribution that the research presented in the creative work / performance makes to the advancement of knowledge in the field.

### **Professional Doctoral Thesis**

13. The professional doctoral thesis may follow either of the structures described in Sections 12.3 and 12.8 respectively. Alternatively, the Professional Doctoral thesis may take the following format:

- a research report; and
- a clinical portfolio or a reflective practice portfolio.

14. In this case, the research report should constitute no less than 50% of the contribution of the final thesis.

### **Master's Degree by Research**

#### **Research Master's Thesis**

15. The research Master's thesis is a monograph including:

- an introduction;
- abstract
- critical analysis of existing research;
- in-depth discussions of the methodological approach taken by the candidate;
- presentation, and critical analysis, of the findings of the research undertaken by the candidate; and
- a substantive conclusion which indicates scope for further research arising out of the candidate's research.

16. The maximum word length, including bibliography and notes, is 45,000. Any appendices remain outside the word limit.
17. A variety of media may be used to support/inform research work - e.g. CDs, websites, photographs and emerging technologies.
18. The order in which components b. to d. are presented, and the nature of any additional written work, will vary from discipline to discipline.

### **Thesis Submission Procedure**

19. The student should provide the Registrar's Office with one soft-bound copy of the thesis for each examiner (internal and external) and also an electronic version of the thesis. The binding is deemed to be temporary, pending completion of the examination process. A supervisor or students should, in no instance, send the soft-bound thesis directly to an examiner.
20. On completion of the examination process, two hard-bound copies of the thesis should be submitted to the Registrar's Office.
21. Also, on completion of the examination process, one additional copy of the final thesis shall be submitted in electronic format (e-version) to the Registrar's Office. It shall be subject to the regulations as to format, except where those apply specifically to physical properties of the print copies, for example, regulations under 12.30 covering binding. In all other respects, the electronic copy shall contain exactly the same content as, and be an exact surrogate of, the print copy. The electronic copy shall be submitted to the Registrar's Office and uploaded to a secure web space by the Library. All accompanying material, e.g. appendices, or files contained on CD-ROM or DVD, that is submitted with the hard-bound copy of the thesis, must also be uploaded to the secure web space.
22. The candidate will be required to sign a declaration form (e-Thesis Submission Declaration Form) confirming that the e-version of the approved thesis has been submitted to the Registrar's Office. The completed declaration form must be submitted to Registrar's Office with the two hard-bound print copies of the thesis.

### **Thesis Ownership and Access**

23. Copies of the thesis submitted for examination will remain the property of DkIT. The Institute will place one final hardboundcopy and one electronic copy of the thesis in the Library for free consultation. The Libraries at DCU and DkIT retain the right, subject to paragraph 12.27 below, to include the summary or abstract in any list of theses published by DkIT or any publication to which DkIT may decide to contribute a list of theses.
24. Candidates are required to sign a declaration form (Thesis Access Consent form) at the time of submission of the thesis for examination, permitting access to their thesis. Where questions of the confidentiality of the contents arise, candidates may request and obtain temporary restriction of access up to a maximum of four years for sufficient cogent reasons, using the appropriate form. An application for the restriction of access must be approved and countersigned by a research student's supervisor.
25. Copyright in the thesis, ownership of the intellectual property arising in the course of its preparation, and patent rights in respect of any relevant product or process are

matters for agreement between the candidate, the supervisory panel, the Institute and other relevant higher education Institution(s)(if applicable).

26. Every candidate irrevocably grants to DkIT and its respective successors and assigns, a non-exclusive, worldwide, royalty free, perpetual licence to reproduce, distribute, modify, store, copy, publicly perform and publicly display, with the right to sub-licence through multiple tiers of sub-licences, and the right to assign such rights in and to the thesis including, without limitation the right to use in any way whatsoever the thesis. DCU may copy, publish, make available, distribute, license, or otherwise use the thesis in any manner worldwide via any medium including without limitation the internet, intranets, extranets, mobile phones, GSM/3G phones, WAP phones, databases, print, interactive television, digital media services, electronic media services, platforms, or any networks (including without limitation telecommunications, wireless, radio, television, cable, satellite, terrestrial networks) currently in existence or which may be developed in the future.

### **Thesis Design and Layout**

27. The language of the thesis shall normally be either English or Irish. Other languages shall require the approval of the DkIT Graduate Research Studies Board. This approval should be sought and justified at initial registration. In all cases, where the thesis is to be published in a language other than English, agreement is always subject to the availability of a supervisory panel proficient in the language in which the thesis shall be published.
28. A thesis should not be excessively long. The maximum limit for a doctoral thesis is 90,000 words of text, including bibliography and notes and, for a Master's thesis, is 45,000 words of text, including bibliography and notes. In the case of scientific and technological theses, the amount of text may be less. Because of this variation from subject to subject, the advice of the supervisor should be sought at an early stage in the preparation of the thesis. The approximate word length must be stated on the Notification of Intention to Submit for Examination form. The use of external professional individuals or organisations for proof-reading or copy-editing of theses on a paid basis is not permitted.
29. The thesis shall:
- be bound within boards of sufficient rigidity to support the work when it is standing upon a shelf. The colour of the boards shall be DCU blue (Pantone Ref: 289);
  - have the following information on the front (board) cover:
  - the title of the thesis in at least 24pt (8 mm) type;
  - the initials and name of the candidate;
  - the award for which the thesis is submitted e.g. MA, MBS, LL.M, MSc, MEng, MPhil, EdD, DPsych, DBA, DMusPerf, PhD; and
  - the year of submission, i.e. the calendar year in which the award is approved by the Examination Board
30. The subject area must not be stated; the reference should be to, for example, 'PhD', not 'PhD in xxxx'.

31. The same information (excluding the title of the thesis) shall be printed in the same order in at least 24 pt (8 mm) type along the spine of the cover in such a way as to be easily legible when the thesis is lying flat with its front cover uppermost. All lettering on the cover and the spine shall be gold in colour and clear of any graphic design.

- The content must be printed, typewritten or otherwise reproduced on one side only of good-quality white A4-sized paper (210mm x 297mm), with a minimum font size of 11, doubly or one-and-a-half spaced, with a left-hand margin at the binding edge of not less than 40mm and all other margins not less than 20mm.
- Pages must be numbered consecutively throughout the text, including those pages incorporating photographs or diagrams which are included as whole pages.
- Where the thesis consists of more than one volume, the pagination should indicate the Arabic number of the volume as well as the page number referring to the volume.
- Page numbers should be located centrally at the bottom of the page and about 10 mm above the edge of the page.
- Appendices should be named alphabetically, and each appendix paginated consecutively but separately from the main text and from the others.
- The thesis must contain a title page with the following information:
  - the full title of the thesis, and subtitle, if any, the name of the candidate and his/her qualifications, if any;
  - the award for which the work is submitted;
  - the name of the University/Institute, the supervisor(s) and of the School with which the candidate is registered;
  - the name and affiliation of external supervisors (if any);
  - the month and year of submission; and
  - the total number of volumes and the number of the particular volume, if there is more than one volume.
- The thesis must have a page, bound into the thesis immediately following the title page, containing the following declaration, signed by the candidate:

32. I hereby certify that this material, which I now submit for assessment on the programme of study leading to the award of ..... (insert title of degree for which registered) is entirely my own work, and that I have exercised reasonable care to ensure that the work is original, and does not to the best of my knowledge breach any law of copyright, and has not been taken from the work of others save and to the extent that such work has been cited and acknowledged within the text of my work.

Signed:

(Candidate) ID No.:

Date:

- It should include a table of contents listing chapters, sections, and appendices. This should be printed or typed in single spacing and include right-justified page numbers. Lists of abbreviations, tables, and figures should immediately follow the table of contents, prior to the abstract. Any

abbreviations, other than those in normal use must be included in this explanatory list.

- The thesis should include an abstract of not more than 300 words. The abstract should be printed or typed in single spacing and should indicate the author and the title of the thesis in the form of a heading.
- Photographs and/or diagrams must be of high quality and appropriately indexed, each accompanied by an explanatory legend.
- Where footnotes and indented quotations are used, these may be in single spacing.

### 13 Appointment of Examiners for Research Degrees

1. The purpose of this section is not only to enunciate procedures for the appointment of examiners but also to set out what students can reasonably expect from the Institute regarding the examination of their work. The DkIT Graduate Research Programme Board is responsible for recommending the appointment of both Internal and External Examiners to the DCU Graduate Research Studies Board.
2. Each candidate for a higher degree by research will be examined by at least one Internal Examiner and at least one External Examiner.
3. In line with best practice in equality issues, the Chair of the relevant Graduate Research Programme Board must ensure, in so far as possible, a balanced gender representation in the appointment of examiners to the examining team for research awards. Where necessary, gender balance may be attained for the viva voce examination in the appointment of the Independent Chairperson.

#### Selection and Nomination of Internal Examiners

4. The regulations and guidelines informing the appointment of Internal Examiners shall be, to all intents and purposes and, in as far as is possible, the same as the regulations and guidelines for appointment of External Examiners as set out below. However, unlike the External Examiner, it will be sufficient for the Internal Examiner to have a broad rather than specific familiarity with the area of research.
5. The Internal Examiner should normally be a member of academic staff in DkIT, retired DkIT academic or a senior researcher, and either hold a doctoral qualification. In cases where the relevant expertise does not exist in DkIT an internal examiner may be appointed from another Higher Education Institution.
6. The Internal Examiner must be independent of the research, the student and the other examiner(s) and not be conflicted in any way in terms of his/her relationship to the supervisor<sup>3</sup>. The Internal Examiner may not be a member of the candidate's supervisory panel, but should be experienced in supervising research students.

---

<sup>3</sup> While it is not expected that the Internal Examiner will necessarily be completely professionally independent of the supervisor, e.g. in terms of other current or former collaborations unrelated to the work under examination, it is expected that the Internal Examiner's relationship to the supervisor will be such that no conflicts due to personal relationships or constraints due to professional or other dependencies which could be deemed to impair the examiner's independence in reaching a decision on the examined work. Cases where the supervisor is

7. In the case of nominees for the role of Internal Examiner who are retired, evidence of relevant research activity within the previous four years will normally be expected.

#### **Selection and Nomination of External Examiners**

8. For research awards, External Examiners are appointed for specific candidates. External Examiners for research students should not be appointed more than twice in a four-year period. Appointments may be made irrespective of External Examiners' duties with regard to taught programmes. No distinction should be made, for the purposes of appointing External Examiners, between Master's and doctoral students.
9. In no circumstances should the student be involved in any aspect of the selection of the External Examiner.
10. In no circumstances may a staff member from DCU act as an External Examiner to DkIT, or vice versa for a postgraduate research award, nor may a staff member of a linked college act as an External Examiner in another linked college.
11. No individual external to DCU or DkIT who has acted as supervisor to a student, or has been involved with the progress of the candidate's research, may act as External Examiner for the student following the submission of the thesis.
12. Reciprocal examining arrangements between the DkIT and other colleges/institutions in the same subject area should be avoided. In addition, the Chair of the Graduate Research Programme Board should not normally nominate more than one External Examiner for research awards from the same School or Department in the same institution within a given academic year.
13. The External Examiner(s) should be contacted informally by the supervisor to ascertain availability and willingness to undertake the role within the timescale envisaged.
14. All nominations of External Examiners are submitted for approval to the DCU Graduate Research Studies Board by means of the Notification of Intention to Submit Thesis for Examination form, which includes an outline curriculum vitae for completion.
15. External Examiners should normally have the following qualities and competencies:
  - recognised expertise in the area which is the subject matter of the thesis being examined;
  - experience in supervising research students and in the examination process of such students; and
  - formal academic qualification and/or professional qualification which is recognised within the particular discipline as forming a suitable background to allow the individual to act in the role of External Examiner.
16. In the case of nominees for the role of External Examiner who are retired, evidence of relevant research activity within the previous four years will normally be expected.

---

line manager of a staff member on short term contract, or within their probationary period, would, for example, preclude their appointment as an examiner for a given student.

- It is imperative, for quality assurance purposes, that the External Examiner is independent of DCU and DkIT, of the supervisor, of its Internal Examiners and of the candidate presenting him/herself for examination. A Conflict of Interest form should be completed by the external examiner at the time of his/her appointment. It must be ensured that all External Examiners should:
- not have been in the employ of DCU or DkIT (in any capacity) in the five years prior to appointment;
- not have been a student of DCU or DkIT in the five years prior to appointment;
- not be a beneficiary of any bursary or remuneration from DCU or DkIT (other than from the post of External Examiner, membership of an Accreditation Board, quality review panel or recruitment/promotions panel);
- not have advised the student on the work underpinning the preparation of his/her thesis;
- not have published with any of the supervisors in the previous five years;
- have no close personal relationship with the candidate, supervisor(s) or other
- examiner(s) such that, in the opinion of the Chair of the relevant Graduate research Programme Board that there is a risk of a Conflict of Interest; and
- have no professional relationship with the candidate, supervisor(s) or other examiner(s) such that, in the opinion of the Chair of the relevant Graduate research Programme Board , there is a risk of a conflict of interest.

### **Appointment and Examination Procedures**

17. Candidates for research degrees are required to notify their supervisor initially of their intention to submit a thesis for examination, using the appropriate form. They must give at least three months' notice and provide a typed 300-word abstract of their work.
18. On receipt of this notice of intention to submit a thesis, the supervisor is required to consult with the relevant Chair of the Graduate Research Programme Board on the selection and nomination of appropriate Internal and External Examiners. The supervisor is responsible for making initial contact with the proposed External Examiner.
19. Following completion of the process of consultation referred to above, the supervisor is required to submit the completed form to the Registrar's Office within two weeks of initial receipt from the candidate. Completed forms will be submitted to the next scheduled meeting of the DkIT Graduate Research Studies Board for submission to the DCU Graduate Research Studies Board.
20. Following approval by the DCU Graduate Research Studies Board of the appointment of the Examiners nominated, the Registrar's Office will issue a formal written invitation to the person(s) nominated to act as External Examiner(s) and, in addition, will provide a copy of the abstract of the work to be examined.

21. Candidates are required to submit soft-bound copies of the thesis to the Registrar's Office as outlined in 12.22 above. The agreement of their principal or joint principal supervisors, or Chair of the relevant Graduate Research Programme Board, to submit the thesis should be obtained prior to such submission (see Sections 11.18, 11.19 above).
22. Following receipt of the soft-bound copies, the Registrar's Office will immediately forward a copy to each Examiner together with the relevant Examiners' Report Form and Examination Regulations for Examiners. Examiners are normally expected to carry out their duties within two months of receipt of the thesis to avoid hardship to the candidate. The Registrar's Office and the candidate's supervisor(s) should be notified immediately if there is any difficulty in adhering to this time requirement.
23. In the case of a thesis submitted for the award of a PhD the viva voce examination will be supervised by an Independent Chairperson appointed by the Chair of the relevant Graduate research Programme Board in consultation with the candidate's supervisor. It will be the duty of the supervisor to liaise with the Examiners and Independent Chairperson regarding arrangements for the viva voce examination. Such arrangements should be finalised as soon as possible after receipt of the thesis by the Examiners and notified in writing to the candidate. The supervisor will also notify the examiners of the contact details of the Independent Chairperson and advise them that all further communication about the examination should go directly, and only, to the Chairperson. The candidate will be advised of the composition of the Board for the viva voce examination. However, the candidate is precluded from making any contact with the Examiners prior to the viva voce examination.
24. In the case of a thesis submitted for the award of a Master's degree, a viva voce is not normally required but may be requested by the examiners.
25. Examiners' Reports and Recommendations will be referred to the next meeting of the Graduate Research Examination Board for consideration and recommendation to the DCU Academic Council (see Section 15 for details).

#### **14 Examination of Master's, PhD Degrees by Research**

##### **Internal and External Examiners**

1. Each candidate for a higher degree by research will be examined by at least one Internal Examiner and at least one External Examiner (see Section 13 regarding appointment regulations and procedures).
2. The thesis will be referred by the Registrar's Office to the Examiners, who cannot accept it directly from the candidate or the supervisor.
3. Examiners are normally expected to carry out their duties within two months of receipt of the thesis. Examiners' draft written reports on the thesis should be made available to the Independent Chairperson of the viva at least one week prior to the viva voce examination. Such draft reports can be modified by the examiners on the day of the examination in light of insight afforded by the examination.

##### **Examination of the Thesis**

4. Examiners should assess a Master's thesis in the light of the following criteria:

- the thesis should show evidence of independent thought and work by the candidate;
  - the investigation or critical study should be scholarly;
  - the candidate should understand the significance of the work; and
  - the thesis and abstract should be presented in grammatically-correct English or Irish or, exceptionally, in another language, and should be readable and succinct.
5. Examiners should assess a doctoral thesis in the light of the following criteria:
- the thesis should contain original, independent work that is rigorous, weighty and significant;
  - the thesis should represent a significant contribution to knowledge of the subject through the discovery of new facts and/or the exercise of independent critical powers;
  - the thesis should demonstrate the candidate's ability to undertake further research;
  - the thesis and abstract should be presented in grammatically correct English or Irish or, exceptionally, in another language, and should be readable and succinct;
  - if the candidate's research is part of a collaborative group project, the thesis should indicate clearly the candidate's contribution and the extent of the collaboration; and
  - in the viva voce examination, the candidate should demonstrate that the thesis presented is his/her own work, and that he/she has an adequate understanding of the research topic and of the broader field of knowledge to which the research belongs.

### **Viva Voce Examination**

6. The viva voce proceedings shall be managed by an Independent Chairperson who is appointed by the relevant Chair of the Graduate Programme Board in consultation with the candidate's supervisor. A Chairperson should be experienced in doctoral supervision, and normally have supervised a student to completion. The Independent Chairperson is expected to steer the examination process through to a conclusion. In very exceptional cases where the examination outcome is not straightforward, the Independent Chairperson's involvement may extend to engagement with the Chair of the DkIT Graduate Research Programme Board, the DkIT Graduate Research Studies Board, the Graduate Research Examination Board, or Head of Research. The Independent Chairperson does not have to be from the School in which the student is registered.
7. Candidates must not contact their examiners prior to the viva voce examination; any communication should be through the supervisor(s) to the Independent Chairperson.
8. The viva voce examination should be held at Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT) unless prior approval has been obtained from the DkIT Graduate Research Studies Board to hold it elsewhere.

9. External and Internal Examiners may meet in advance of a viva voce examination, if any of the examiners desires, without a candidate's academic supervisor and/or the Independent Chairperson of the examination being present.
10. The viva voce examination shall be carried out jointly by the External and Internal Examiners. The candidate's supervisory panel may be present at the viva voce examination. However, the candidate must be given the option of stating to the Independent Chairperson, not later than ten days prior to the examination, that he/she would prefer the supervisory panel not to be present. If this is indicated, then the supervisor should not be present. The supervisor, where present, is not permitted to participate in the examination. He/she should provide clarification of any matters only if and when requested by the examiners or the Independent Chairperson. The supervisor does not participate in the final decision and should leave the meeting while the deliberations leading to this decision are taking place, unless asked by the Independent Chairperson to remain.

### **Examiners' Reports and Recommendations**

11. Following the viva voce examination, the examiners should complete the form relating to the examination of the thesis. Reports should incorporate a commentary on the work presented for examination as well as detailing any corrections to be made. Where the Examiners recommend a revision and re-submission of the thesis, they should provide the candidate with a clear written statement of the changes required, and should also include this with their reports.
12. If an examiner wishes to change the written report on the thesis after the viva voce, then this should be done at the end of the examination or, at the latest, within one week of the examination (in the latter case, the report should be sent to the Independent Chairperson).
13. The Chairperson is responsible for sending the report to the Registrar's Office.
14. In the case of a Master's candidate where, normally, no viva voce examination is required, the Internal Examiner is responsible for sending the completed reports to the Registrar's Office. The Registrar's Office informs the student of the outcome of the examination.
15. Examiners should give clear grounds for their recommendation, particularly if it is not clear-cut and favourable, and indicate a timeframe for corrections or revisions.

The final outcome of the examination process should be reported as one of the following recommendations:

- that the degree sought be awarded;
- that the degree sought be awarded subject to clearly specified textual emendations;
- that the degree sought be awarded subject to clearly specified revisions to content;
- that no degree be awarded, but that the candidate be allowed to submit a revised thesis, normally within a year;
- that, where a doctoral award is sought, a Master's degree be awarded instead

- that no degree be awarded as the candidate is unlikely to reach the standard for a research award; or
  - that, where a Master's degree was sought, the candidate be advised and permitted to withdraw the thesis for revision and re-submission at a later date for the award of a doctorate, subject to the following conditions: The candidate, prior to such re-submission for the doctoral award, must have been a registered full-time graduate research student for at least twenty-four months (or pro rata for a part-time registered postgraduate student). The re-submitted thesis shall be examined in accordance with the regulations for examination of theses presented for a doctoral award and, in an exception to regulation 14.17, by a different External Examiner, to be appointed by the DCU Graduate Research Studies Board.
16. Where a thesis has to be corrected or revised, the revisions shall be carried out to the satisfaction of the Internal Examiner and/or the External Examiner(s), as may be determined by the examiners. As the supervisor does not participate in the examination process, he/she should not sign off on revised theses. Such signing off is the sole responsibility of the examiners.
  17. Where no award but a resubmission is recommended, normally the same examiners assess the new thesis. In such cases, the period for revision of the thesis and/or presentation for re-examination shall normally be not more than one year from the date when the student is informed of the recommendation. This is the date of the viva voce or, where no viva voce is held, the date when the Registrar's Office communicates the recommendation to the student.
  18. Following incorporation of revisions, the thesis should be reviewed only to establish the extent to which the Examiners' recommendations have been met. There should be no further review of the thesis on other grounds. Examiners should approve corrections within six weeks of receiving the revised thesis.

#### **Remit of the Independent Chairperson**

19. The Independent Chairperson's role is to manage the viva voce examination, ensuring that the candidate is treated fairly, to provide guidance on the DkIT academic regulations and practices and to communicate the outcome of the examination to the student following the viva voce examination. The Chairperson will make sure that all the required documentation is completed and will communicate the outcome to the appropriate parties.
20. The Chairperson should be drawn from a pool of experienced academic staff with experience of doctoral supervision, having supervised a student to completion to the level of the award sought. He/she shall be unconnected with the programme of research carried out by the candidate under examination.
21. The Chairperson shall not have any input into, or participate in any way in, the assessment of the candidate; the assessment of the candidate remains the sole responsibility of the examiners.
22. The Chairperson, prior to the viva voce examination and in consultation with the examiners, will determine the order of questions and the overall format of the examination.

23. A candidate may be asked by the Chairperson to introduce his/her research briefly and summarise the main findings.
24. The length of the viva voce examination may vary in accordance with different disciplinary practices, and it will also depend on the examiners' requirements. As a guideline, it should normally be in the range one-and-a-half hours to three hours.
25. At the end of the viva voce examination, the candidate and the supervisor, if present, will be asked to leave the room while the examiners deliberate on the outcome (unless the supervisor is asked by the Chairperson to remain). They will be requested to return after the decision has been made in order to be verbally informed of it by the examiners.
26. With reference to these regulations, and in consultation with the examiners, the Chairperson will clarify the timeframes for submission of corrections, if any, and sign-off by the relevant examiner(s).
27. In cases where no award but a resubmission is recommended, the Chairperson informs the examiners, supervisor(s) and candidate of regulations 14.15 and 14.17 regarding examination of a resubmitted thesis.
28. The Chairperson ensures that a corrected or revised thesis is sent to the appropriate examiner(s) for review and final sign-off.
29. The Chairperson is responsible for ensuring that the examination form, which includes the examiners' reports on the thesis and on the viva voce examination, is correctly filled out and is returned to the Registrar's Office once the final thesis has been signed off by the Internal and/or External Examiner(s). If a resubmission, or no award, is being recommended, then a revised thesis is not expected at this time, and the forms are to be returned to Registrar's Office without delay.

#### **Procedure after Examination**

30. The Registrar's Office will refer the examiners' reports to the appropriate DkIT Graduate Research Examination Board for Research Degrees for consideration at its next meeting. Thereafter, a consolidated report listing the names of candidates recommended for a higher degree is presented to DCU Academic Council for approval, and a note of cases recommended for resubmission, and the number where an award was not recommended.
31. The Registrar's Office advises candidates of the official outcome of the examination process, including in cases where a thesis has been referred for resubmission or where no award, or an award lower than the one sought, has been recommended by the examiners.
32. A candidate cannot appeal the outcome of the examination on the basis of the examiners' judgment. A candidate does, however, have the right to appeal the outcome on the grounds of process and procedure, as detailed in Section 16.

## 15 Graduate Research Examination Board for Research Degrees

### Establishment of Examination Board

1. In each School, there shall be constituted a Graduate Research Examination Board for Research Degrees chaired by the Chair of the Graduate Research Programme Board or his/her nominee.
2. The membership of each Graduate Research Examination Board shall be drawn from the relevant academic staff of the School together with relevant academic staff of other Schools who have been involved in cross-disciplinary research projects, if any. Supervisors of candidates who have been examined, and Internal Examiners of same, must attend. In exceptional cases, where a supervisor or Internal Examiner cannot attend, a suitable nominee who has been briefed on the examination must attend.

### Scheduling of Examination Board

3. There will be two officially-scheduled meetings per calendar year of each of the Board for research degrees, one in spring and one in autumn. The exact dates will be indicated on the Academic Calendar.
4. The convening of a meeting of the Graduate Research Examination Board for research degrees shall be notified to academic staff by the Chair of the Graduate Research Programme Board.

### Remit of Examination Board

5. The remit of the Graduate Research Examination Board is to:
  - consider and approve (or otherwise where necessary) examiners' reports and their recommendations in respect of candidates presenting for Research Master's and Doctoral Degrees.
  - Note from the relevant Broadsheets the decision(s) of previous meetings of the Graduate Research Examination Board within the School in relation to any taught elements taken by students as necessary for the achievement of the award for which they are presenting, and approving results for graduate training elements.
6. Processing of examiners' reports and their recommendations:
  - The Board will be required to ensure that the examination process for each candidate has been carried out in accordance with these Academic Regulations.
  - The Board will be required to draw the attention of the DkIT Graduate Research Studies Board to individual comments by examiners if such comments are deemed to provide useful feedback to the Institute.
  - The Board will be required to specifically consider issues arising from a negative recommendation by an examiner, and recommend an appropriate course of action to DkIT Graduate Research Studies Board and DCU Academic Council for their consideration. The subsequent decision of DCU Academic Council in respect of a recommendation(s) submitted by the relevant Graduate Research Examination Board(s) will be communicated in writing by the Registrar's Office to the research student concerned.

**Documentation for Examination Boards**

7. Examiners' reports on candidates for research degrees will be provided by the Registrar's Office and will be available to the Chair of the Graduate Research Examination Board for consultation before the meeting.
8. A copy of each thesis examined will be available at the Graduate Research Examination Board.
9. Details relating to graduate education modules that a student has taken, and have been considered at a Graduate Research Programme Board(s), will also be available at the meeting on the broadsheets.

**16 Appeals**

1. Appeals can be submitted in respect of negative recommendations regarding progression, decisions not to confirm or transfer a student to the PhD register, and the outcome of an examination. Transfer/confirmation recommendations are approved at the DkIT Graduate Research Studies Board, examination recommendations are approved at the relevant Graduate Research Examination Board meeting and the opportunity to appeal follows notification of the decisions of these Boards. In respect of negative progression recommendation, the date of decision is taken as the date when the completed review form is submitted to Registrars' Office.

**Submission**

2. Appeals must be submitted, using the appropriate form(s) and with supporting written documentation, to the Registrar's Office.
3. Appeals must be submitted by the next deadline for consideration by a meeting of the Appeals Committee, following notification of approval of the relevant decision. Dates are published in the Academic Calendar, and late appeals are not considered.

**Appeals Committee**

4. The DkIT Graduate Research Studies Board will establish an Appeals Committee to consider appeals. The term of the Appeals Committee is three years, but replacement members can be appointed by the DkIT Graduate Research Studies Board, should that be required within this timeframe.
5. The Appeals Committee is normally chaired by the Chair of the DkIT Graduate Research Studies Board. The Secretary of the DkIT Graduate Research Studies Board acts as Secretary to the Appeals Committee, and attends in a non-voting capacity.
6. Membership of the Appeals Committee is no fewer than 4, but can be up to 8, and includes a mix of genders and Schools and a student representative. Up to 3 members of the Appeals Committee may be drawn from outside the DkIT Graduate Research Studies Board from a pool of very experienced in research student supervision and examination.
7. No member of the Appeals Committee can consider a case where he/she has a conflict of interest or prior significant involvement. The Chair of the DkIT Graduate Research Studies Board can appoint a temporary member if the total membership falls below 4, or gender or School mix is not achieved because of such circumstances. Where the Chair of DkIT GRSB has a conflict of interest or prior involvement in a

particular case, the Appeals Committee is chaired by an independent member of DkIT academic staff

8. Decisions of the Appeals Committee are subject to approval by the DkIT Academic Council.

#### **Grounds for Appeal**

9. A student must make explicit the grounds upon which he/she is appealing against a decision of a supervisory panel or examiners.
10. An appeal may not be based on disagreement with the academic judgement of the examiners or supervisory panel.
11. An appeal is considered only on the basis of one of the following:
  - an alleged failure to adhere to the DkIT Graduate School regulations or an argument as to insufficiency of regulations which had a bearing on the case;
  - documented circumstances affecting the candidate's performance which he/she was unable or, for valid reasons, unwilling to divulge before a decision was reached and which would have made a real and substantial difference to the decision;
  - a case that sufficient weight was not given to documented extenuating circumstances notified prior to the decision being reached; or
  - evidence of a material administrative error or a material irregularity in how the examination/review was assessed which has made a real and substantial difference to the supervisory panel's or examiner's decision.
12. Appeals may not be submitted on the basis of allegations of inadequacies in supervision; complaints of that nature, not resolved during the period of study and before the submission of the thesis / confirmation/ transfer report or annual review will not be taken as grounds for appeal.

#### **Outcome of an Appeal**

13. Successful appeals will not result in a new academic decision, as the Appeals Committee does not re-examine student work. However, candidates in respect of whom an appeal is upheld may be awarded further opportunities to have work considered, or some other remedy applied as appropriate.

## **Appendix 1: Music, Composition and Performance**

### **PhD and Masters by Research by research in Music**

A Masters by Research and PhD in music may take the following forms: written dissertations, public recitals, lecture recitals, music editions, compositions and practice-based portfolios, music technology and software development, recordings and AV materials, catalogues and other appropriate models relevant to the discipline. The delivery format and weighting of the component parts of each submission will be agreed between the student and the supervisory panel.

The submission may consist of a practice element, supported by a critical commentary indicating the project's originality and contribution to the discipline or interdisciplinary field.

The submission as a whole should demonstrate artistic skill and originality.

### **Areas of Research in Music include:**

#### **Composition**

A portfolio of compositions (scores/CDs), accompanied by a critical commentary on the works submitted. The content of the portfolio will be agreed by the supervisor and the candidate; at least one of the works should be substantial. Electroacoustic compositions must be submitted in CD format and graphic scores where applicable should also be included.

#### **Performance Practice**

Major public recitals and lecture recitals, accompanied by programme notes and CD recordings, form the major part of the assessment for practice-based research. The major performance element will be supported by an extended written commentary.

#### **Ethnomusicology, Traditional and Popular Music, Jazz**

These may include:

- Ethnographic analysis of styles, periods, regions, trends or performance practices. Analysis of historical collections, old or modern repertoires or performers.
- Organological, bibliographic, discographic or educational survey and analysis.

#### **Musicology**

A dissertation on an appropriate musicology topic. This may also take the form of a scholarly edition or annotated catalogue with critical commentary.

#### **Music Technology**

Software Development and Production: Research involving software/hardware development and production should be submitted with detailed documentation describing the project.

#### **Music Education / Music and Community**

A dissertation on an appropriate topic. The final submission may also include a practice-based component.

Students are expected to display evidence of creativity, critical thought and analysis, and reasoned argument leading to the creation or presentation of new insights, direction and standards. Composers should demonstrate an individual style and approach and the ability to develop extended structures. Performances should be at a professional level and be

underpinned by critical reflection of the artistic practice. Musicological and ethnographical researchers will produce substantial, annotated documentation.

## **Appendix 2: Guidelines for candidates, supervisors and examiners on the format of 'PhD by Artefact'**

### **Background**

In some academic disciplines, making research awards on the basis of scholarly work presented in diverse formats has become accepted. There is, for example, a small but long tradition of doctoral awards for music composition, stretching back to the medieval university, which is currently undergoing expansion worldwide. The increase in engagement with scholarly ideas through film, music composition and various forms of media including innovative technologies has led to these as recognised forms of high level scholarly enquiry.

DKIT regulations regarding submissions for a PhD award are given in the *Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Research Degrees* ('the regulations'), and they allow for submission in a format which includes two substantial elements:

- a written document of at least 20,000 words and
- a substantial artefact or portfolio of artefacts.

Candidates considering submitting using this format should consult the regulations as well as these guidelines. Disciplines for which a research award on the basis of artefacts is particularly relevant include: music composition and music technology, film, sound, multimedia or communications studies. However, it may also be relevant to cross disciplinary projects involving quite different fields such as computer science, so this list is not exhaustive. An artefact may be a musical score, or a substantial piece of practice-based research via a media production, always accompanied by a sustained exercise in critical study.

### **The Standard of a PhD**

Irrespective of the format for PhD submission the standard by which the work is evaluated remains exactly the same as doctoral awards through other formats: a significant and original contribution to knowledge in the field. The examination will seek to establish originality, rigour and substance of contribution at a scholarly level appropriate to the award. While the artefact(s) constitute the main body of the thesis, and these in themselves must contribute significant new knowledge to the field, candidates must also be aware that the examiners' judgement of the entirety of the submission is the sole determinant of the outcome.

At PhD level examiners will consider the coherence of the entire work and the quality of the candidate's defence of the thesis at *viva voce*. This includes the appropriateness of methodologies used, the rigour of critical thought and analysis, the quality of argument, and of presentation, the significance of the contribution to new knowledge, and where collaboration has been necessary as part of the production, the candidate's particular contribution to this aspect of the submission. The accompanying analytical commentary is therefore an equally important element in ensuring that examiners are convinced that the work presented as a whole meets the standard of the research award, especially with regard to articulating the coherence of the work and the role the candidate played in work which was produced collaboratively.

The award of doctorate is based solely on the work presented for examination and carried out during the period of registration with the University/Institute for the research degree.

- There is no question of the academic award being made simply in recognition of creative work which has received popular or critical acclaim, or of a research award being 'due' to a recognised composer/ director/ collector/editor.
- The thesis overall may be deemed to fall short of the required standard, even if the artefact(s) attract recognition, awards or success outside the academic arena.

### **Artefacts which can be included**

Artefacts which can be included in the submission are limited to those which are based on work undertaken, under supervision, during the student's period of registration. Work produced prior to this is excluded.

The format of 'artefact' is broadly interpreted, and examples may include creative works, media productions or art (e.g. music compositions, film, digital media, music technology/software, photographs etc.). It also includes definitive texts such as critical editions. The artefact, or collection of artefacts must be substantial, and the particulars of this are dictated by norms in the field. In music composition, the compositions must be no less than 90 minutes in duration, with at least one element that is an extended work. For media productions in linear form, this may be audio-visual material to a maximum of 1 hour (documentary film or mixed media production), for responsive media productions a minimum of 40 minutes of user engagement is a useful guideline.

### **Considerations at time of admission**

Prospective students should first seek the support of a member of staff qualified to supervise a research award in this format and have demonstrated their capacity at this level through a review of their recent work in this area. Normal minimum admission criteria for research degrees apply as do expectations regarding readiness for academic and analytical writing. This is of key importance, and students should already have gained a good first degree or MA/MSc in a cognate discipline. In addition, this type of format should be identified and, in the context of the intended format, student suitability in terms of his/her skill's base should be established at time of admission to the university. Students must be able to provide evidence of their ability and skills to conduct practice-based research. In the case of composition it would, for example, be a prerequisite that the candidate was already at an advanced level of composition and could demonstrate this through scores and publically performed works. In the case of media productions evidence could be in the form of a creative portfolio including examples of filmmaking, photography, phonography, multimedia projects or other appropriate creative practice.

The decision to opt for a research project in this format should be made jointly by an applicant and the proposed supervisors(s). It is important that the supervisor has directly relevant scholarly output, and is familiar with standards internationally for this format. Supervisors must provide guidance with regard to the expected academic level, and the scope within the proposed topic to make a contribution at the level of the award. Both applicant and supervisor should consider the potential risks inherent in this approach, and the likely timeframe the work might take to complete. Candidates may not have a good understanding of these aspects

and have unrealistic expectations based on past successes, or related (but not necessarily academic) writing composition or media production, so supervisor advice is key at this stage.

Particular care should be taken in applying the Institute *RPL Policy* in such admissions. Experience and expertise in composing or film production for example while vital, does not at all necessarily imbue the requirements for writing at a scholarly level. All RPL based applications should be considered using the process outlined in the policy, and equivalence of prior learning to the level 8 or 9 award, usually required for admission onto the register, rigorously assessed. There are two aspects to the submission, and there is an onus on the university/Institute to ensure a candidate can have a reasonable expectation to successfully execute both.

Subsequent to admission, the intended format should be taken into account in identifying developmental opportunities for the student, setting of milestones and monitoring of progress. At the confirmation or transfer stage, the intended format should be reconfirmed, and again noted on the 'intention to submit' stage.

### **Student Contribution to the Work**

It is recognised that some aspects of the submission may have involved other individuals in the production. It is expected that in such cases, the candidate has had at least a director/producer level role, that the candidate includes a signed statement of their contribution to the work and the specific contribution of others, both to be independently verified in all cases. Where possible and practicable this should be done by the principal supervisor and all collaborators / support personnel signing off on their agreement with the candidate's statement. However, in some cases, due to the number of such people, or the nature and/or organisation of the work, it may be more appropriate for the verification to be given by both the principal supervisor, and by another person external to the university/Institute who was in a position to verify the detail. 'Sign-off' in this case may be via electronic means.

In order to prepare to draft such a statement, and to evidence a candidate's contribution, it is best practice to maintain a reflective journal over the period of registration which captures aspects of the production or process as they evolve. Interactions and influences of technical and artistic collaborators is reflected in the journal, which may be included as an appendix to the submission where relevant.

There is no 'formula for success' in terms of the work included. The criteria candidates and their supervisors should use in judging whether the work is sufficient are the same as the criteria applied to all PhD submissions, and relate to the substance of the original and significant contribution to the field made by the candidate.

### **External Examiners**

These guidelines and the relevant extract from the regulations should be provided to potential external examiners at the first stage of (normally informal) contact, so that they can evaluate whether they are comfortable with undertaking the task of examination of a thesis in this format. It is expected that all examiners of a submission of this type have a strong record of scholarly output relevant to the format of artefact, and are in a position to evaluate the work in the context of international norms in the field at the level of the award.

**Presentation and examination of the various elements of the thesis**

As described in the regulations, the overarching critical document should:

“detail the research questions addressed through the medium of the artefact(s), sets the artefact(s) in the context of existing literature, give a detailed overview of the theme(s) common to all elements included, argue the coherence of the submission and justify the methodology adopted. It should evaluate the contribution that the research presented in the submitted artefact makes to the advancement of knowledge in the research area.”

The minimum length of this element of the thesis is 20,000 words, however in many disciplines it may be significantly longer than this. Students should, at an early stage, familiarise themselves with the norm in their field.

Compositions should be presented in the printed format of a musical score using conventional notation or extended and novel notational formats where appropriate. The analytical commentary should follow the usual format and style for thesis presentation. A student may choose to include CD recordings within the inside cover of the thesis but this is not a requirement.

Artefacts which do not ‘lie flat in an A4 format’, i.e are non-textual in nature, must be presented in a way which facilitates appropriate access to examiners. This may take the form of a live event (an exhibition or a performance) or a production, but it very much depends on the artefact. It is important that examiners have read the written part of the thesis prior to accessing work in this way. Poor sequencing or timing could undermine the examination process. It is also important to note that it is direct access to the artefact, and not to a record of it that must be afforded to examiner and which is examined. Examiners must have time to reflect on both elements of the thesis submission prior to holding of a *viva voce*.

It is also important that such artefact(s) are captured in some digital format for the purposes of being archived with the written aspects of the submission. This may require recording of an exhibition, installation or performance. It is very important to note that this record is not the basis of the examination, and is done simply to provide a complete record of the work for which the research award was made. Subject to resources, technical support may available in the relevant School or Department to facilitate such recording. It is required to be of a standard fit for archiving purposes, but to include post-production which would detract from or disguise elements of the student’s work evaluated.

**Archiving of Theses submitted in this format.**

In line with institute policy, PhD theses submitted in this format will be made available on the DKIT STOR electronic repository, subject to the same procedures as monographs. In terms of text based elements, the electronic version has to be exactly the same as the printed corrected version finally submitted. Elements which cannot be presented as a pdf must be archived in another digital format, and made available with the e-thesis. Supervisors should engage with the library staff at an early stage to plan how this will be done.

It is important that any issues relating to Intellectual Property and Copyright are resolved prior to submission of the thesis just as for monograph-format submissions. An embargo can apply to theses submitted in this format, as it can for the traditional monograph, should there be valid reasons to apply this.

## Appendix 3

**Guidelines for candidates, supervisors and examiners  
on the format of 'PhD through Creative or Performance Practice'**

DKIT regulations regarding submissions for a PhD award are given in the *Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Research Degrees* ('the regulations'), and they allow for submission in a format which includes two substantial elements:

- a written document of at least 20,000 words and
- one or more creative or performance based elements of substantial nature.

Candidates considering submitting using this format should consult the regulations as well as these guidelines.

Disciplines for which a research award on the basis of creative or performance practice is particularly relevant include music and theatre. However, it may also be relevant to cross disciplinary projects involving quite different fields.

**Background**

In some academic disciplines, making research awards on the basis of scholarly work presented in diverse formats, including a performance or creative work, has become accepted. The UK Arts Humanities Research Board has long since accepted a principle that in some areas of research, performance may indeed be the only appropriate mode of investigation. That notwithstanding, there was considerable discourse around the acceptance and evaluation of such work as research at the time of the introduction of the UK Research Assessment Exercise and for many years thereafter<sup>4</sup>. A particular focus was on the distinction between high quality creative work (however well-researched), and that which makes a significant research contribution, on the role and status of an exhibition or performance and relationship between it and the permanent reference for subsequent scholars, and on guidelines and best practices for evaluation. These DCU guidelines draw significantly from output of a project<sup>5</sup> called *Practice as Research in Performance* (PARIP) (2000-2005) which looked at such research within academic contexts, and aim to deliver highest standards.

Although terminology differs slightly, institutions in Ireland including UL, NUIG (film) and UU award PhDs based on creative or performance practice, as does QQI. Internationally, many institutions such as the University of London Goldsmiths, University of York, University of Leeds, Royal College of Music and Birmingham City University/Birmingham Conservatoire award PhDs on this basis.

---

<sup>4</sup> Angela Piccini and Baz Kershaw, 2003. Practice as Research in Performance: from epistemology to evaluation. *Journal of Media Practice*: 4 (2): 113-123.

<sup>5</sup> Nelson, R. and Andrews, S., 2003, *The regulations and protocols governing Practice as Research (PaR) in the performing arts in the UK leading to the award of PhD*, PARIP, [http://www.bris.ac.uk/parip/par\\_phd.htm](http://www.bris.ac.uk/parip/par_phd.htm), accessed Dec 11<sup>th</sup> 2015.

### **The Standard of a PhD**

Irrespective of the format for PhD submission the standard by which the work is evaluated remains exactly the same as doctoral awards through other formats: a significant and original contribution to knowledge in the field. The examination will seek to establish originality, rigour and substance of contribution at a scholarly level appropriate to the award. While the creative or performance practice element(s) constitute the main body of the thesis, and these in themselves must contribute significant new knowledge to the field, candidates must also be aware that the examiners' judgement of the entirety of the submission is the sole determinant of the outcome.

At PhD level examiners will consider the coherence of the entire work and the quality of the candidate's defence of the thesis at *viva voce*. This includes the appropriateness of methodologies used, the rigour of critical thought and analysis, the quality of argument, and of presentation, the significance of the contribution to new knowledge, and where collaboration has been necessary as part of the production, the candidate's particular contribution to this aspect of the submission. The accompanying analytical commentary is therefore an equally important element in ensuring that examiners are convinced that the work presented as a whole meets the standard of the research award, especially with regard to articulating the coherence of the work and the role the candidate played in work which was produced collaboratively. The work must have separable, demonstrable research findings that are abstractable for subsequent scholars, and not locked into the experience of the performance. A reflective journal which captures all aspects of the performance practice process should be maintained.

The award of doctorate is based solely on the work presented for examination and carried out during the period of registration with the Institute for the research degree.

- There is no question of the academic award being made simply in recognition of creative work which has received popular or critical acclaim, or of a research award being 'due' to a recognised performer.
- The thesis overall may be deemed to fall short of the required standard, even if the works performed attract recognition, awards or success outside the academic arena.

### **Elements which can be included**

Performances and creative practice which can be included in the submission are limited to those which are based on work undertaken, under supervision, during the student's period of registration. Work produced prior to this is excluded.

The performance element must be substantial, and the particulars of this are dictated by norms in the field. For example in music performance no less than three major public recitals, and two lecture recitals/presentations on work in progress would normally be required.

**Considerations at time of admission**

Prospective students should first seek the support of a member of staff qualified to supervise a research award in this format and have demonstrated their capacity at this level through a review of their recent work in this area.

Normal minimum admission criteria for research degrees apply as do expectations regarding readiness for academic and analytical writing.

In addition, this type of format should be identified and, in the context of the intended format, student suitability in terms of his/her skill's base should be established at time of admission to the University/Institute. In the case of music performance it would, for example, be a prerequisite that the candidate was already at a professional standard of practice, and could demonstrate this through evidencing a record of achievement at a high level. An interview/audition would also normally be required.

The decision to opt for a research project in this format should be made jointly by an applicant and the proposed supervisors(s). It is important that the supervisor has directly relevant scholarly output, and is familiar with standards internationally for this format. Supervisors must provide guidance with regard to the expected academic level, and the scope within the proposed topic to make a contribution at the level of the award. Both applicant and supervisor should consider the potential risks inherent in this approach, and the likely timeframe the work might take to complete. Candidates may not have a good understanding of these aspects and have unrealistic expectations based on past successes, or related (but not necessarily academic) creative or performance work, so supervisor advice is key at this stage.

As part of the admission process, the candidate should be asked to develop a written statement indicating the topic to be investigated, the research questions and aims of the project the methodologies to be used, the conceptual framework and the proposed outcomes (practice and written). Resources required (space, access to facilities, production budgets etc.) should also be outlined and the School must consider that it is in a position to support such a project in the appropriate way. Where a candidate is suggesting use of their own resources, the adequacy of these to fulfil the aims of the project should be established. The scope, likely timing and location of examinable presentation(s) for the PhD should be planned and agreed.

Particular care should be taken in applying the Institute *RPL Policy for Research Awards* in such admissions. Experience and expertise in creative or performance practice for example while vital, does not at all necessarily imbue the requirements for writing at a scholarly level. All RPL based applications should be considered using the process outlined in the policy, and equivalence of prior learning to the level 8 or 9 award, usually required for admission onto the register, rigorously assessed, including interview/audition. There are two aspects to the submission, and there is an onus on the university to ensure a candidate can have a reasonable expectation to successfully execute both.

Subsequent to admission, the intended format should be taken into account in identifying developmental opportunities for the student, setting of milestones and monitoring of progress. At the confirmation or transfer stage, the intended format should be reconfirmed, and again noted on the 'intention to submit' stage.

**Student Contribution to the Work**

It is recognised that some aspects of the performance may have involved other individuals in the production. It is expected that in such cases, the candidate has had full artistic control, that the candidate includes a signed statement of their contribution to the work and the specific contribution of others, both to be independently verified in all cases. Where possible and practicable this should be done by the principal supervisor and all collaborators / support personnel signing off on their agreement with the candidate's statement. However, in some cases, due to the number of such people, or the nature and/or organisation of the work, it may be more appropriate for the verification to be given by both the principal supervisor, and by another person external to the institute who was in a position to verify the detail. 'Sign-off' in this case may be via electronic means.

In order to prepare to draft such a statement, and to evidence a candidate's contribution, it is best practice to maintain a reflective journal over the period of registration which captures aspects of the production or process as they evolve. Interactions and influences of technical and artistic collaborators is reflected in the journal, which may be included as an appendix to the submission where relevant.

There is no 'formula for success' in terms of the work included. The criteria candidates and their supervisors should use in judging whether the work is sufficient are the same as the criteria applied to all PhD submissions, and relate to the substance of the original and significant contribution to the field made by the candidate.

**Supervision**

Students must afford reasonable access to their process to supervisors, who will provide feedback in a manner which parallels that for written work.

In order to prepare to draft a statement of and to evidence a candidate's contribution, it is good practice to maintain a reflective journal over the period of registration which captures aspects of the production or process as they evolve. Interactions and influences of technical and artistic collaborators are reflected in the journal, which may be included as an appendix to the submission where relevant.

**Presentation and examination of the various elements of the thesis**

1. The presentation of formally examinable practice should not normally be more than one calendar year in advance of the final written submission. The performance(s) or creative works must be public, with access facilitated for examiners.

It is important that examiners have read relevant contextualising comment prior to accessing each element of the work in this way. Poor sequencing or timing could

undermine the examination process. It is also important to note that it is direct access to the performance or creative practice piece, and not to a record of it that must be afforded to examiners and which is examined.

It is nonetheless also important that performances are captured in some digital format for the purposes of being archived with the written aspects of the submission. This may require recording of an exhibition, installation or performance. It is very important to note that this record is not the basis of the examination, and is done simply to provide a complete record of the work for which the research award was made, and to provide a reference for future scholars. In whatever format, a copy of this record must be included with the written thesis as an appendix.

Subject to resources, technical support may available in the relevant School or Department to facilitate such recording. It is required to be of a standard fit for archiving purposes, but to include post-production which would detract from or disguise elements of the student's work evaluated.

2. As described in the regulations, the overarching critical document should:  
"detail the research questions addressed through the medium of the creative work / performance in the context of existing practice, give a detailed overview of the theme(s) common to all elements included, argue the coherence of the submission, and justify the methodology adopted. It should evaluate the contribution that the research presented in the creative work / performance makes to the advancement of knowledge in the field."

The minimum length of this element of the thesis is 20,000 words, however in many instances it may be significantly longer than this. Students should, at an early stage, familiarise themselves with the norm in their field. The standard of presentation of the written thesis should be commensurate with those for a PhD monograph.

Examiners must have time to reflect on both elements of the thesis submission prior to holding of a *viva voce*. The submission as a whole will be the subject of the *viva voce* examination.

## Examiners

These guidelines and the relevant extract from the regulations should be provided to potential external and internal examiners at the first stage of (normally informal) contact, so that they can evaluate whether they are comfortable with undertaking the task of examination of a thesis in this format.

It is expected that all examiners of a submission of this type have a strong record of scholarly output relevant to performance based research, or practice as research, and are in a position to evaluate the work in the context of international norms in the field at the level of the award. There are challenges relating to finding suitable examiners for this format, ensuring

continuity across evaluations of elements of the thesis over time, and coordinating opportunities to access process.

It may be necessary to appoint examiners much earlier than is customary for traditionally written PhDs. Where external examiners meet candidates prior to the final viva, care must be taken to ensure maintenance of an appropriate professional distance.

- Feed-back on any work they may observe which is not formally for examination should be avoided, so that subsequent process is not influenced.
- Any post-presentation discussion of an examined element should be confined to examiner questions on points of clarification about the process and issues concerning the practice itself, reserving more overarching or conceptual questions to the *viva voce*.

Costs relating to examination (which may require 2 or more visits to the institute or another venue) should be discussed with Registrar's Office.

### **Archiving of Theses submitted in this format.**

In line with institute policy, PhD theses submitted in this format will be made available on the DKIT STOR electronic repository, subject to the same procedures as monographs. In terms of text based elements, the electronic version has to be exactly the same as the printed corrected version finally submitted. Performances upon which assessment was based must be recorded and archived in digital format, and made available with the e-thesis. Supervisors should engage with the library staff at an early stage to ensure the digital format planned is one which can be accommodated.

It is important that any issues relating to Intellectual Property and Copyright are resolved prior to submission of the thesis just as for monograph-format submissions. An embargo can apply to theses submitted in this format, as it can for the traditional monograph, should there be valid reasons to apply this.