Kingston University
Postgraduate Researcher Handbook 2024-25
MA/MSc by Research, MPhil, PhD, Professional Doctorates

Contents

1. Welcome

Dear Postgraduate Researcher,

Welcome to Kingston University, London, in the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames. As a Postgraduate Researcher at Kingston University, you join a vibrant and dynamic research community. Kingston's research strategy aims to produce significant, innovative, and transformative research, engaging local, national, and international partners.

This PGR Handbook is designed as a reference to be consulted throughout your research degree. It is updated each year and the latest version can be found on the Kingston website and on the Graduate Research School Canvas module. A hard copy may be requested from your faculty. The Handbook includes details of the facilities and services available to postgraduate researchers across KU and contains technical information about the policies and regulations that apply to your research degree, the conduct of your research, the support that you can expect during your time here, and the way in which your progress will be monitored and assessed as you develop your project from commencement to completion. It should be read in conjunction with your Faculty PGR Handbook.

I hope that your research time at Kingston is productive and that it generates not only new forms of knowledge, methods and ideas, but also new friendships and lifelong collaborations.

P. A. Harries

Professor Cilla Harries
Head of the Graduate Research School and Researcher Development
Kingston University, London

2. Academic Governance and Support for Postgraduate Researchers

2.1 The National Context

The United Kingdom is a major international provider of postgraduate research education. The ways in which research training is delivered are influenced by the active involvement of universities, the UK research councils (through UK Research & Innovation) the Office for Students, and industry. Support for doctoral-level programmes is provided by UK-wide research organisations like Vitae, who offer a sector-based research framework for PGR training and monitor universities' adherence to research quality standards through the award of the European HR Excellence in Research Award. Within most universities, doctoral training to underpin quality research is provided through Graduate Research Schools (or Doctoral Colleges). At Kingston, there is a central Graduate Research School (GRS) that provides a structured training program and other resources to support all postgraduate researchers and their supervisors.

2.2 The Graduate Research School at Kingston University

The Kingston Graduate Research School (GRS) is part of the University's Research and Impact Directorate, which is led by the Pro Vice Chancellor of Research. The Graduate Research School team consists of the academic Head of the Graduate Research School and a team of support staff. The GRS supports all postgraduate research across the university.

The GRS works in accordance with Kingston's Research Strategy to facilitate the development of areas of research strength, to create resources to support new researchers, and to help build a structured sense of community for our growing numbers of research students. In addition to MA/MSc by research programmes, we offer doctoral degrees in a number of different formats: the "traditional" PhD comprising a written thesis that summarises research conducted under the supervision of academic staff over (typically) 3 years of full-time study, PhD by Practice, Professional Doctorates in various disciplines, PhD by Publication, or PhD through work with industry via a collaborative doctoral award.

2.3 What does the Graduate Research School (GRS) do?

At Kingston University, the Graduate Research School (GRS) provides resources and a structured program to support all postgraduate researchers and their supervisors; it also provides advice and guidance on academic regulations, procedures and policies. The GRS governs the examination processes for all research degrees in the University, and the final arrangements for the conferment of awards. Working closely with the University Research Degrees Committee and the faculties, the Graduate Research School ensures that support for postgraduate researchers is provided at the appropriate levels, tailored for individual needs, and is responsive to national and international developments in graduate research policies and practices.

The GRS Structured Programme provides training and resources for postgraduate and early-career researchers, their supervisors, and industry business partners over the life of the research degree, to ensure that research competencies are achieved and that a clear understanding of research within core and related disciplinary fields is attained. Some of this programme is mandatory, and other parts are optional and designed to complement any discipline-specific research training that might be expected.

The GRS Structured Program is published on Canvas and sessions are advertised by email. The Chair of your Faculty Research Degrees Committee (FRDC) and your Faculty Research Student Coordinator (FRSC) will be able to update you on forthcoming events and details of the Core Researcher Development Program. You must sign up for the GRS Canvas module.

2.4   Pro Vice-Chancellor

Professor Simon Wortham is Pro Vice-Chancellor with overall responsibility for research activity and governance across the university, including postgraduate research.

2.5   Your Supervisory Team

Supporting your research programme is a team of supervisors, led by your First Supervisor. The supervisory team is approved by your Faculty and may be subject to change over the duration of your candidature. Your responsibilities and those of your supervisors are set out in *The* Code of Practice in Section 9 of this handbook. Note that for the purposes of this handbook the term "First Supervisor" will be used, however you may also hear the role referred to as "Lead Supervisor", "Principal Supervisor", or "Director of Studies".

2.6   The Faculty

As a postgraduate researcher you will be enrolled within one of the University's Faculties. Your key contacts at faculty level will be the **PGR Director**, who is **Chair of the FRDC** (Faculty Research Degrees Committee) and the **Faculty Research Student Co-ordinator** (FRSC). Within each faculty there are also **Postgraduate Research (PGR) Co-ordinators,** academic members of staff for each School, Department or research area who provide additional support. Your supervisor or your FRSC will be able to tell you who is your PGR Co-ordinator.

2.7   Key Contacts

Teams or email are usually the best way to contact staff.

Faculty	Role	Contact
Kingston School of Art	PGR Director and Chair of FRDC	Professor Sara Upstone s.upstone@kingston.ac.uk
	Faculty Research Student Coordinators	Emily Bowles E.Bowles@kingston.ac.uk Emerald Day e.day@kingston.ac.uk Bob Oswald r.oswald@kingston.ac.uk
Health, Science, Social Care and Education	PGR Director and Chair of FRDC	Professor James Barker j.barker@kingston.ac.uk
	Faculty Research Student Coordinator	Nicola Campbell (HSCE) n.campbell@kingston.ac.uk Hannah Adams (LSPC) h.adams@kingston.ac.uk

Business and Social Sciences	PGR Director and Chair of FRDC	Professor Giampiero Favato G.Favato@kingtson.ac.uk
	Faculty Research Student Coordinators	Penny Tribe (Law, Social and Behavioural Sciences) p.tribe@kingston.ac.uk Keily Geary (Business School) k.geary@kingston.ac.uk
Engineering, Computing and the Environment	PGR Director and Chair of FRDC	Professor Dimitrios Makris d.makris@kingston.ac.uk
	Faculty Research Student Coordinator	Rosalind Percival r.percival@kingston.ac.uk
Graduate Research School (GRS)	GRS Coordinator (*Contact for general PGR student advice and guidance, and information on the examination process*)	Richard Gray Richard.Gray@kingston.ac.uk
	GRS Training and Development Coordinator (*Contact for queries regarding the Researcher Development Programme and induction*)	Marie Withers m.withers@kingston.ac.uk
	GRS Manager (*Contact for high-level queries about the University's regulations, policies and procedures for research students, discussion regarding informal complaints or concerns*)	Rachel Graham rachel.graham@kingston.ac.uk
	Head of the Graduate Research School and Researcher Development (*Contact for a high-level academic query about research at Kingston or the training available for researchers*)	Professor Cilla Harries Harries, Cilla <P.Harries@kingston.ac.uk>

2.8   I have a query or issue I need help with, who should I contact?

Query	Who	How
Research issues – content	First Supervisor & supervisory team	Establish preferred communications and time frames in first meetings. Revise and agree annually.
Research administration queries and matters regarding registration and mode of attendance.	Faculty Research Student Coordinator (FRSC), see above for contact details.	Email or call on Teams. Check Canvas and Faculty PGR pages for FAQ
Core Researcher Development Program	GRS	Check Canvas first. Email the GRS team for queries.
Ethics	First Supervisor & team / Faculty Research Ethics Lead	Supervision meeting & training
GDPR	First Supervisor & team -> FRDC -> Faculty Research Ethics lead	Supervision meeting & training
Mid-Term/Upgrade/Annual Monitoring Report	First Supervisor & team / FRSC / GRS	OSIS / Supervision meeting / Core training sessions provided by GRS.
Examination	First Supervisor & team / FRSC	Supervision meeting. Call on Teams or email FRSC.
Complaints	Members of supervisory team / FRDC Chair / GRS / Academic Registry for formal complaints (see My Kingston for details of the formal process)	Email or call on Teams to arrange meeting. GRS Drop in hours 10-11am first Thursday of each month.
Other assistance (if not supervisor); chat	Postgraduate Research Student Representative/ FRDC Chair (see above for details)/ PGR Coordinator/ GRS	Email or call on Teams to arrange meeting. Contact details for the PGR reps are available from your FRSC.

2.9   Academic Degree regulations, examinations: Decisions and Approvals

There are two main committees responsible for your research degree. The **Faculty Research Degrees Committee (FRDC)**, which is responsible for considering the progress of your research from registration to completion, and the **University Research Degrees Committee (URDC)**, which considers any exceptional circumstances relating to your registration and progress, as well as the recommendations of examiners with regard to the conferment of your final award.

2.10   The Head of the Graduate Research School

The Head of Graduate Research School leads in all matters relating to postgraduate researchers, including the researcher development programme. They Chair the University Research Degrees Committee (URDC), which acts as the examination board for all research degrees in the University.

2.11   Canvas (online resources for KU's PGRs)

The Graduate Research School has a useful module on Canvas, the University's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), which covers all of the essentials, including support available, training resources, forms, regulations and guidelines, and ideas relating to networking opportunities. Enrol on the module as soon as you have completed your registration and have your Kingston login at: canvas.kingston.ac.uk/enroll/JXXBYX

2.12   KU Extra

Events happening across Kingston are advertised on KU Extra, including many GRS events and key library training sessions. Filtering by Type will help your search.
https://kuextra.kingston.ac.uk/

2.13   Quality Assurance and Opportunities for Feedback

The Graduate Research School, along with the Academic Registry and the URDC, are responsible for monitoring the quality of the University's research degrees.   This is achieved through faculty-based annual programme reports that are considered by the URDC and followed up with an in-depth, cyclical Internal Quality Assurance Review of each faculty's processes.

The University is committed to providing opportunities for the student body to put forward their views and contribute to the enhancement of their degrees. Each faculty will have at least one **Postgraduate Research Student Representative** who plays an active role in the FRDC and will be happy to put forward any comments on your behalf. Their contact details are available from your Faculty Research Student Co-ordinator. There is also a Postgraduate Research Student Representative on the University Research Degrees Committee. If you are interested in either of these roles, please contact your Faculty Research Student Co-ordinator.

During your research you are required to complete a progress report each year:
Annual Monitoring Report AMR (all students)
Mid-Term Report (Masters by Research students only)
Upgrade (sometimes also called Progression Transfer or Initial Monitoring) (After one full year of study, PhD students are invited to apply for an Upgrade to transfer registration from MPhil to PhD).

These review points provide formal opportunities for you to give feedback about your progress each year (see 'Monitoring Your Progress'), including comments about your research programme and supervision.

The Graduate Research School will be pleased to receive your informal comments or queries at any time. We also conduct various surveys specifically for postgraduate researchers to help ensure that the University is aware of and responsive to your needs.

Graduate Research School
The GRS support postgraduate researchers in all aspects of their study. If you need advice or would like to discuss your experience at Kingston with someone outside of your faculty, please email rachel.graham@kingston.ac.uk for an appointment.

3. Your Research Degree: From Admissions to Alumni

3.1 Admissions

For information on the admissions process and how to apply for a place at Kingston University, please see the research degrees page of the Kingston University website: www.kingston.ac.uk/research/research-degrees/

3.2 Enrolment

Once you have been offered a place as a postgraduate researcher and your registration has been approved (via the RD3b Registration Details form) you will be invited to enrol as a student of the University. At enrolment you will receive a student identity card giving you access to library and computing facilities. Once enrolled you will be liable for tuition fees and will be subject to the University's General Regulations as well as the Academic Award Regulations applying to your programme of research (see Sections 6-9). If you fulfil your obligations as a student and the progress of your research is deemed acceptable by the University, your registration as a postgraduate researcher will be re-confirmed annually.

3.3 Enrolment variations

3.3.1 MPhil to PhD Researcher Status
Postgraduate researchers embarking on a programme of study leading to the award of PhD will usually be registered for the MPhil in the first instance. Subject to satisfactory completion of the Upgrade process (sometimes also called Progression Transfer or Initial Monitoring) your registration will be changed to PhD. See Section 9, "Academic regulations and standards: a guide to your research award: PhD (including Professional Doctorates)" for a more detailed explanation.

3.3.2 MA/MSC to PhD Professional Doctorate.
Where appropriate, postgraduate researchers embarking on a programme of study leading to the award of PhD by Professional Doctorate will be registered on an MA/MSc in the first instance. Subject to satisfactory completion of the Upgrade Process your registration will be upgraded to PhD Professional Doctorate.

3.3.3 UKRI Funded Studentships
UKRI funded students (Techne and SEDarc) will have a different submission timetable than other PGR students. Your funding offer letter will specify your submission date.

SEDarc funded students will produce a thesis with the following:

(a) A section on project management

(b) A data management plan

(c) A chapter on knowledge exchange, perhaps reflecting learning from the placement (e.g policy report, industry solution, accessible science communication)

(d) Archiving of study materials, data, and reproducible analysis code (as appropriate) on the Open Science Framework.

Note from SEDarc: These aren't additions to the traditional PhD; the balance of emphasis changes. We anticipate less empirical work in this new format than in traditional PhD.

3.4   Fees and Scholarships

Information on tuition fees and how to pay is on the Kingston University website:
www.kingston.ac.uk/postgraduate/fees-and-funding/tuition-fees/

Students may hold a range of externally and internally funded scholarships. If you hold a scholarship, please check with the appropriate regulatory body for their terms and conditions and rules of attainment. For further guidance, you should discuss with your supervisor, or Chair of FRDC in the first instance. Supervisor/Student Agreement

Students and supervisors must complete the Student/Supervisor Agreement during the first month of enrolment. The aim of this agreement is to set expectations and prompt you to discuss how the supervisory relationship will work. The signed agreement must then be given to the Faculty Research Student Coordinator to be kept on file. See Canvas for the Agreement template.

3.5   Best Practice in Research: Policies and Guidelines

As a postgraduate researcher you should be aware of and familiar with the University's policies and guidelines on best practice in research.
http://www.kingston.ac.uk/research/policies-and-guides/
All policies and guidelines referred to below can be found on the Research Degree Regulations and Guidelines page from the Graduate Research School area on Canvas.

3.5.1   Research Ethics
For all research projects, the researcher is required to consider the ethics of the research design and methods. The ethical considerations may differ according to the specific discipline and methodology – e.g. the ethical design of a questionnaire; the consent and disclosure of anonymity of participants; the data storage; the use of human tissue and its storage; etc.) For all research involving people, you must follow the University's guidelines Ethics: Guidance and Procedures for Undertaking Research Involving Human Subjects . If ethical clearance is required, your supervisor will work with you to apply for approval. *Please be aware that research that raises ethical issues that has not been reviewed and approved is not admissible for examination.*

3.5.2   Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) for Postgraduates
The University considers that IP produced by postgraduate students, both taught and research, is a collaborative activity between the University, supervisor and postgraduate student. All postgraduate students are normally required to assign their rights to the University and will be subject to the University's revenue sharing agreement. Certain exceptions apply and you should read the Kingston University Student Intellectual Property Rights Policy for detailed information and talk to your First Supervisor if you have any concerns. The University's Student IPR Appeals Panel will consider any appeals against IPR decisions.

3.5.3   Data Management
The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) is a European law covering the use and management of personal data. Researchers are required to be compliant with GDPR; postgraduate research students must confirm with their supervisor(s) how their research data collection and management will comply with GDPR guidelines. If you are using personal data, it is important that you complete appropriate GDPR training.
https://kingstonuniversity.sharepoint.com/sites/mykingston/myuni/randr/data-protection/GDPR-for-students/GDPR-and-research

3.5.4   Referencing
The referencing style you should use is determined by subject and disciplinary convention. You should consult your supervisor to decide what style is appropriate for you. Useful information regarding different referencing styles, as well as information on bibliometrics and other relevant material is available from the Library on My Kingston:
https://kingstonuniversity.sharepoint.com/sites/mykingston/library/help_and_training/Pages/referencing.aspx

3.5.5   Academic Misconduct
The University expects all postgraduate researchers to maintain excellent scholarly standards. As researchers you join a community of academic citizens. If you are found guilty of misconduct it is likely that you will be required to withdraw from the University – The Academic Regulation *AR7 Academic Misconduct Research Degrees* outlines the procedure.
http://www.kingston.ac.uk/aboutkingstonuniversity/howtheuniversityworks/policiesandregulations/
There is also useful information on Academic Integrity on our website
https://www.kingston.ac.uk/aboutkingstonuniversity/howtheuniversityworks/policiesandregulations/academic-integrity/

3.5.6   Plagiarism
Plagiarism is presenting the work of another as one's own without proper acknowledgement.
It is a serious academic offence.

This definition applies to written material that encompasses, for example, direct and unattributed quotations, as well as the incorporation of other forms of original material, for example, music, art and design works, images, drawings, diagrams, data, computer programmes, ideas and inventions. It includes:
•   published and unpublished sources, including the work of other students;
•   the need to cite the contributions of others to the production of composite (group) work;
•   the reuse of one's own work;
•   the unacknowledged use of ideas and materials, not just the written word.

Guidance on plagiarism and resources to help you understand the issue of plagiarism are available on My Kingston:
https://kingstonuniversity.sharepoint.com/sites/mykingston/myuni/academicregulations/Pages/plagiarism.aspx
You are advised that you will be asked to submit your dissertation or thesis electronically and that it is likely to be screened using plagiarism detection software.

3.6   Field Work and Other Travel

If you need to conduct field work, visit archives, or have other reasons for travelling as part of your research, for example, to present at a conference, you should consult your supervisor regarding the appropriate risk assessment and ensure you have applied for travel insurance (see below).

International students in the UK on a student visa - you must request an Authorised Absence letter from your Faculty Research Student Coordinator if you intend to leave the UK (this also applies to travel for holidays).

3.7   Health and Safety

The University has a Health and Safety policy, available on the My Kingston link below, that you should familiarise yourself with. Your faculty may also have health and safety procedures linked to your particular research area, please check with your supervisor.
https://kingstonuniversity.sharepoint.com/sites/mykingston/myuni/safety/Pages/default.aspx

3.8   Travel and Insurance

KU staff and students are covered by the University's travel insurance for business, course-related field trips and other University activities if travel is booked through the university's provider, Key Travel. To ensure that cover is in place before you leave, your supervisor **must** complete an online risk assessment and apply for travel insurance on your behalf. Arrange a meeting with your supervisor to go through this together. Guidance is on staffspace (not accessible from a student log in):
https://kingstonuniversity.sharepoint.com/sites/staffspace/dep/GCLO/RBCI/insurance/Pages/Apply-for-travel-and-travel-insurance.aspx

Students booking their own travel and accommodation are not covered by the University's travel insurance and must book their own.

Public and professional liability cover is provided by the university's insurance as long as the research is conducted in agreement with your supervision team and in line with university policy.

3.9   Annual Leave (holiday)

PG Researchers are entitled to up to 35 days of leave each year, plus bank holidays. For part-time students this is calculated pro-rata. Leave must be negotiated in advance with your First Supervisor and recorded by them. The leave year will begin on the first day of the academic year.

International students in the UK on a student visa - you must request an Authorised Absence letter from your Faculty Research Student Coordinator if you intend to leave the UK (this also applies to travel outside the UK for your research).

3.10   Keeping Records of Supervision Meetings

After each scheduled meeting, prepare a brief Supervisory Meeting Record, agreed with your supervisory team. These will be submitted and reviewed each year with your Annual Monitoring Report or Upgrade. If meetings are very frequent then it is not expected that a record will be prepared for every meeting, but an agreed summary should be prepared <u>monthly</u> for full-time students, or every two months for part-time students. These records should be uploaded as assignments on Canvas each month and submitted as an appendix to your Annual Monitoring Report or your Upgrade Reports.

3.11   Monitoring Your Progress

All postgraduate researchers have their progress monitored at pre-determined points in their registration. This is a two-way process: as well as providing evidence of progress with your research, monitoring is intended to ensure that your personal development programme is adequate to your needs and that you are effectively supported by the university.

The timing of your monitoring will depend on the award for which you are registered and the date you first enrolled. Full details of the specific requirements for your award can be found in Sections 6-9.

Monitoring reports are submitted online via OSIS.

3.12   Changes to Your Registration Status

3.12.1   Sick Leave
For any periods of absence due to sickness, you are expected to inform your First Supervisor as soon as possible. For periods of sickness absence of more than one month you must inform your Faculty Research Student Co-ordinator who will discuss with you whether an interruption is appropriate. You may be asked to provide a doctor's note. If you are receiving stipend payments from an external sponsor or from Kingston University, it is your responsibility to inform the sponsor who will apply their own policy concerning stipend payments during periods of extended (1 month or greater) sick leave.

3.12.2   Maternity Leave
An additional absence of up to one year is given for maternity leave. If this is applicable, please read the university's Student Pregnancy, Maternity and Becoming a Parent during Study Policy (AP2): http://www.kingston.ac.uk/aboutkingstonuniversity/howtheuniversityworks/policiesandregulations/

3.12.3   Maternity Support Leave (including Paternity Leave)
Up to two weeks of leave may be taken without interrupting your registration. If you wish to take shared parental leave this should be applied for using the interruption process outlined below.

3.12.4   Interrupting or Suspending Your Registration
Interruptions of up to a total of one year across your period of registration may be approved if you are unable to make adequate progress with your research project due to, for example,

significant medically-certified periods of illness or difficult personal circumstances. In such circumstances, you may apply to the Faculty Research Degrees Committee to interrupt your registration for a maximum of one year. Your Faculty Research Student Co-ordinator will advise you how to submit the request. You may be required to provide formal evidence (eg medical certificate) to support your request. An application for suspension must be made at the time and retrospective applications will not normally be accepted.

If you are unable to return to your studies after one year you may apply to the FRDC for up to one further year. You may be required to provide formal evidence to support your request. If you are unable to return after this your registration is likely to be terminated. You will have the right to make a new application for admission as a postgraduate researcher (with advanced standing where appropriate), subject to normal admission requirements. Re-admission is not guaranteed.

Any period of interruption will be added to the final expiry date of your registration on a month-by-month basis. Note that planned breaks should start from the 1st of the month.

3.12.5   Extending Your Registration

MPhil and PhD candidates are normally expected to complete and submit a dissertation/ thesis within the maximum period allowed for registration. In exceptional circumstances, where the production of a dissertation or thesis has been delayed, it may be possible to apply to the Faculty Research Degrees Committee to extend registration for **up to one year on one occasion only**. Forms are available from your Faculty Research Student Co-ordinator (form number RD9b). The form must be countersigned by your First Supervisor and Head of School and returned to your Faculty Research Student Co-ordinator. The application for extension should give details of any exceptional circumstances that have delayed the completion of the dissertation or thesis, and should contain a detailed action plan showing how the additional time will be used to complete and submit the thesis/dissertation.

Candidates for MA/MSc by Research may be granted an extension of a **maximum period of four months** after one year of full-time or two years of part-time study.

3.12.6   Transferring to a Different Degree Programme

Transferring from, for example, MA or MSc by Research to PhD, or from PhD to MPhil can be considered by your Faculty Research Degrees Committee based on your performance or changes to your personal circumstances.

3.12.7   Changing your Mode of Attendance

If you wish to change your mode of attendance (e.g. from full to part-time study) you should notify your Faculty Research Student Co-ordinator as soon as possible in order for the change to be effected and the new registration period to be calculated. Note that students may not transfer from full-time to part-time within 6 months of their submission deadline.

3.12.8   Withdrawing from Your Degree

If, having begun your research, you are considering withdrawing from your studies you should first discuss your options with your First Supervisor. It is also advisable to meet with your local PGR Coordinator to discuss the reasons motivating your decision. To officially withdraw from your degree please contact your Faculty Research Student Co-ordinator and submit the request through the 'Your Studies' page on OSIS.

3.13   Challenges During Your Registration

The University has procedures in place to ensure that all complaints and academic appeals are dealt with in a fair and timely manner.

3.13.1   Mitigation During Assessment

If you will miss an assessment deadline, including your Annual Monitoring, Upgrade and Submission deadlines, due to sickness or personal circumstances you may apply for recognition of mitigating circumstances. Appropriate evidence must be provided. Note that mitigation cannot be applied for after the assessment has been completed.

Mitigating circumstances regulations:
https://www.kingston.ac.uk/aboutkingstonuniversity/howtheuniversityworks/policiesandregulations/mitigating-circumstances-and-extensions-regulations/

3.13.2   Informal Complaints

Where possible, before making a formal complaint to the University you should first discuss the problem with your First Supervisor and/or other member of your supervisory team. If s/he cannot resolve the issue, or if you are unable to raise the issue with one of your supervisors, you should contact your School/Departmental PGR Coordinator or the Chair of your Faculty Research Degrees Committee (FRDC) for further advice in the first instance. If the matter still cannot be resolved, then it will be referred to the Dean of your faculty and then to the Chair of the University Research Degrees Committee (URDC). Alternative contacts to those listed above include your Faculty Research Student Co-ordinator, your Head of School or the Graduate Research School (see Section 2).

3.13.3   Mediation

Mediation is a voluntary, informal process that complements and supports the University's procedures for dealing with workplace issues. It includes grievances and complaints, relationship issues, and communication difficulties, as well as harassment, discrimination, victimisation and bullying. It offers early assistance before problems escalate into major issues and helps individuals consider options to resolve the situation. If you think mediation may help you resolve a situation please see the webpage below for further information or contact the University's Human Resources department or the Graduate Research School.

3.13.4   Formal Complaints: The Student Complaints Procedure

This procedure should be used if the process outlined above has not resolved your complaint. The procedure deals with most aspects of the student experience at the University other than appeals against assessment decisions. For further details please see the webpage My Rights and Responsibilities on My Kingston:
https://kingstonuniversity.sharepoint.com/sites/mykingston/myuni/randr/Pages/complaints.aspx

3.13.5   Supervisory Issues

Should problems arise in your relationship with your First Supervisor or other members of your supervisory team you should contact the Chair of your FRDC or School/Department PGR Co-ordinator for independent advice in the first instance. You can also contact the GRS for advice (see contacts at section 2.7 in this handbook). If the matter cannot be resolved then it will be referred to the Head of School or the Dean of your faculty, and then to the Chair of the URDC.

3.13.6   Academic Appeals Procedure

If you wish to make a representation against a decision made by an examination board you should refer to the document "Student Appeals Process – Research Degrees" which details the appeals process including the circumstances in which you have a right of appeal and the steps that you need to take in order to make one. For further details please see the webpage for Academic Appeals on My Kingston:
https://kingstonuniversity.sharepoint.com/sites/mykingston/myuni/academicregulations/Pages/appeals.aspx

3.13.7   Policy on Harassment

Kingston University is committed to creating an environment where everyone is treated with dignity and respect. The University will not tolerate bullying or harassment and will take action to protect the dignity of its staff and students.

The Harassment Contact Scheme is offered in recognition of the distress caused to a person who experiences inappropriate behaviour, harassment and bullying. It is also there to support those who are accused of harassment or bullying. It is a scheme that allows anyone experiencing inappropriate behaviour from a member of staff or a student at Kingston University to seek help and support.   The scheme gives staff and students a way of informally resolving the issue they are experiencing. Please note this is not part of Kingston University's formal complaints procedure and if you expect the University to take steps to curtail harassment, you must use the formal Student Complaints Procedure.

For further details please see the webpage Harassment Contact Scheme on My Kingston:
https://kingstonuniversity.sharepoint.com/sites/mykingston/mysupport/equality/Pages/Harassment-Contact-Scheme.aspx

3.14   Writing Up Mode of Attendance

3.14.1   Masters by Research

Under the Academic Regulations Masters by Research candidates are not given an additional registration period for writing up. In exceptional cases, a four month extension with a reduced fee may be applied for via the FRDC.

3.14.2   PhD and MPhil

Once you have completed your research and your normal registration period (3 years full-time or 6 years part-time) you may apply for official Writing Up status, at a reduced fee, to finish writing your thesis/dissertation. The University expects all the research and the majority of your writing up to have been completed by the end of the normal registration period (3 years full-time or 6 years part-time). Only one writing up period is allowed and extensions are not normally permitted. For full-time researchers the maximum period allowed for writing up is 12 months, for part-time researchers it is 24 months. For PhD and MPhil candidates the maximum period of registration before submitting for examination is 4 years full-time or 8 years part-time and going to writing up status does not extend this deadline.

To qualify for writing up mode of attendance you must:

- have completed three years full-time (six years part-time) towards a PhD or two years full-time (four years part-time) towards an MPhil

- have the agreement of your First Supervisor that your research is at an appropriate stage for writing up

- be prepared to submit your thesis for examination within 12 months full-time or 24 months part-time of starting writing up, or by your submission deadline, whichever is earlier.

To apply for writing up mode of attendance you should complete form RD15, available from your Faculty Research Student Co-ordinator. This should be signed by your First Supervisor and returned to your Faculty Research Student Co-ordinator.

While writing up you will have access to learning and non-specialist ICT resources, although you may not have access to specialist research resources, as your research should be complete before you begin writing up.

Writing up can start at any point in the year after the required registration period has been completed. However, changes to your mode of attendance should be restricted to standard enrolment points wherever possible.

You will be expected to complete an Annual Monitoring Report during writing up at the normal point in the academic year.

If your tuition fees are partly or wholly paid by an external funding body it is your responsibility to inform your sponsor of any change of study status.

Extensions to writing up are not normally allowed. If the thesis is not submitted by the end of the writing up period/ submission deadline, you must apply to re-register as a part-time student (full-time for international students due to visa requirements) and must pay the appropriate tuition fee.

Note: The date of transfer to writing up cannot extend the maximum period of registration. Your submission deadline will be the earlier date of either 12 months full-time or 24 months part-time from the start of your writing up period, or 4 years (full-time) or 8 years (part-time) from your initial registration date. For example, if a full-time postgraduate researcher transferred to writing up after 3.5 years of registration, the submission deadline would remain 4 years from the start of their degree, not one year from the start of their writing up period. For exceptional cases, where a formal extension to the registration period has been agreed, the start and end date of writing up will be amended accordingly.

3.15   Preparing for Examination

3.15.1   Timescales
Each of the steps outlined in this section and the next section must be approved by a committee and can therefore take some time. If you need to complete your degree by a certain date, for example, due to visa restrictions, to take up an offer of employment, or to attend a particular graduation ceremony, you must be sure to allow plenty of time. The Graduate Research School or your Faculty Research Student Co-ordinator can advise how long each process will normally take.

3.15.2 Appointing Your Examiners

Please note that you should not solicit examiners yourself, neither should you contact examiners directly after they have been appointed, regarding any aspect of your research**.**

Your First Supervisor and Head of School will, after consultation with you, on your behalf, make arrangements for the assessment of your dissertation or thesis, including the nomination of internal and external examiners. This will probably happen during the final stages of your research, when you are writing up the thesis/dissertation.

Each candidate must be examined by an assessment panel comprising at least one external examiner and one internal examiner. Where the candidate is a member of staff at Kingston University two externals must be appointed in addition to an internal. The examining team, as a whole, must have previous experience of examining research degrees at the appropriate level. Examiners with close relationships to the candidate, supervisors and/or the other examiners may not be appointed. Candidates' supervisors cannot be appointed as examiners. *Any type of current or previous connection/association/collaboration between the supervisory team or the student and a potential examiner must be declared for the FRDC and URDC to consider.*

The assessment arrangements must be approved by the Faculty Research Degrees Committee and ratified by the University Research Degrees Committee (which will also consider any exceptional circumstances). Once the arrangements have been approved you will not be allowed to change the title of your thesis/dissertation.

3.15.3 Confidentiality/Embargo

A thesis is normally made publicly available but can be kept confidential if required. This is normally due to potential patent applications, commercially sensitive research or publisher requirements. The application is made via the supervisor at the time of submission for examination. Your Faculty Research Student Coordinator or the Graduate Research School can advise further. An initial two-year embargo is standard, but can be extended by emailing the Graduate Research School towards the end of the initial two year period.

3.15.4 Electronic Submission

Note *e-thesis submission* was introduced in March 2019. This applies to the final approved version of your thesis which you submit once the examination process has been completed. You should prepare for this by discussing copyright issues and the appropriate Creative Commons licence with your First Supervisor.

3.15.5 Preparing Your Manuscript for Assessment

Theses/dissertations are submitted for examination electronically, in Word and PDF. Please check with your Faculty Research Student Coordinator to confirm if your examiners would also like a paper copy of your thesis/dissertation.

The information below applies to the manuscript submissions for all research degrees. Where publications or additional material forms part of the thesis, the information applies to the main analytical thesis. Award-specific guidelines on the required length and content of your thesis/dissertation can be found in Sections 6-9 of this handbook in the award-specific information.

Your manuscript must:

a. be in A4 format (unless approved by the University Research Degrees Committee in advance)

b. be in a permanent, legible typescript or print. The character size of the main text, including displayed matter and notes, must not be less than 2.0 mm for capitals and 1.5 mm for x-height (the height of lower-case x)

c. if printed, be printed double sided on white paper and within the range 70 g/m^2 to 100 g/m^2.

d. have a margin of at least 40mm at the left-hand binding edge of the page. All other margins must be at least 15 mm

e. use double or one-and-a-half line spacing for the main text. For indented quotations and footnotes you may use single spacing

f. have pages numbered consecutively throughout the main text, including any whole-page diagrams or illustrations

g. include a title page specifying
   - the full title of the thesis or dissertation
   - the full name of the author. Please capitalise the surname/family name
   - a statement that the thesis/dissertation is being submitted in accordance with the requirements for the appropriate award at Kingston University
   - the name of any formally approved collaborating establishments
   - the month and year of submission (for resubmissions this should be the month and year of resubmission)

Sample thesis/dissertation title page:

<div align="center">

The full title of the thesis at the top:
any subtitle below

Student full name CAPITALISE LAST NAME

Submitted in accordance with the requirements for the degree of Masters by Research /
Master of Philosophy / Doctor of Philosophy / Doctor of Education / Doctor of Business
Administration

Kingston University

In collaboration with: (if applicable)

Month, Year of submission
(for resubmissions this should be the month and year of resubmission)

</div>

h. incorporate: an abstract of around 300 words stating the nature and scope of the work undertaken and contribution made to knowledge of the subject; a contents page; a statement of objectives (this can be part of the introduction if you wish); a reference list or bibliography

i. not contain any material that has been previously submitted for an award at an institute of Higher Education either in the UK or overseas. The candidate must confirm this in a Declaration form (see the regulations for your award for further information)

j. acknowledge if you have published material from your thesis/dissertation in advance of examination or where you are submitting publications or other materials as part of your thesis submission (see also below on Research Degrees involving Creative Work, Publications and Non-Traditional Forms of Assessable Material). In such cases, copies of the published material should either be included in with the dissertation or thesis or may be placed in an electronic appendix or attached in a pocket at the end of the hard copy

k. it is customary to include acknowledgments to individuals and organisations that have assisted you in your research, including your First Supervisor.

3.15.6   Binding Your Paper Manuscript for Assessment
Please check with your Faculty Research Student Coordinator to confirm if your examiners would also like a paper copy of your thesis/dissertation. If so, it must be submitted for examination in a secure, temporary binding. Spiral or perfect binding is recommended. The Library has machines for spiral binding. For larger theses, you may wish to split your work into two volumes. The thesis/dissertation must not be presented in a ring or spring binder.

3.15.7   PhD by Prior Publication/Portfolio
Candidates should see the separate guidance for their programme regarding binding.

3.15.8   Research Degrees Involving Creative Work, Publications and Non-Traditional Forms of Assessable Material
A candidate may undertake a programme of research in which the candidate's own creative work, publications (or equivalent) form the most significant part of the intellectual enquiry. Such creative work, publications or equivalent may be in any field (for instance, fine art, design, engineering and technology, architecture, creative writing, musical composition, film, dance, and performance), but shall have been undertaken as part of the registered research programme.

For such a submission, the thesis should reflect a coherent research process, demonstrate a critical appreciation of the context of the research, its relationship to existing literature/practices and received opinion, and show that the research has produced an original contribution to knowledge. The relationship of this reflective commentary to the other forms of material submitted must be clearly articulated so that the work forms a single coherent body, considered collectively as the thesis. Within the thesis, the balance between the reflective commentary and the creative work, publications or equivalent plus the relative weighting given to each element, must meet subject-specific requirements and be agreed by the candidate's Faculty Research Degrees Committee.

Submissions which include non-traditional forms of assessable material are subject to the same assessment criteria as traditional submissions; and as such, regard should be paid to the award descriptor and assessment criteria detailed in Section 6: Academic Regulations and Standards, including the guidance on word limits.

The proposed submission, including special arrangements for assessing non-traditional forms of material e.g. by public exhibition, performance or other demonstration, must be approved by the Faculty Research Degrees Committee as part of the application for registration and updated (for PhD only) at the point of upgrade from MPhil to PhD. As with all research degrees, assessment arrangements must be referred by the FRDC for approval by the University Research Degrees Committee.

The final submission must include a permanent record of the creative work, publications or equivalent. Where practicable, all elements of the submission should be included in both the electronic copy and the hard copy. For the hard copy, if possible, the different elements should be bound together, for example, publications, photographic record, audio or visual recordings, musical score, or diagrammatic representation can be attached to a hard-bound written thesis or dissertation. Guidance on the length of the reflective/critical element can be found in the individual degree regulations set out in Sections 6-9: Academic Regulations and Standards.

3.15.9   Including Publications in Your Thesis
Further information on the submission of publications as part of your thesis is available on the Research Degree Regulations and Guidelines page from the Graduate Research School area on Canvas. For electronic submission you should check with your publisher in case there are restrictions on publishing the work within your thesis. In these cases, it may be necessary to include a web link to the publication as an appendix.

3.15.10 Treatment of Scholarly Work
A candidate may undertake a programme of research in which the principal focus is the preparation of a scholarly edition of a text or texts, musical or choreographic work, or other original artefacts. The final submission shall include a copy of the edited text(s) or collection of artefact(s), appropriate textual and explanatory annotations, and a substantial introduction and critical commentary which set the text in the relevant historical, theoretical or critical context. Additional guidance may be provided by your Faculty for your particular subject.

3.16   Submission and Examination

3.16.1   Submitting Your Thesis/Dissertation
Your thesis/dissertation must be submitted in the required format (as detailed in the previous section) and before your period of registration has expired.

When your thesis/dissertation is ready for submission you must email an electronic copy to your Faculty Research Student Co-ordinator. They may ask you to provide hard copies for your examiners if they request it. You should also ask if your First Supervisor would like a hard copy and have one for your own use in the oral examination. **Your electronic version may be scanned by plagiarism detection software.**

Your First Supervisor must complete a form stating whether s/he supports your submission. You have the right to submit your thesis/dissertation against the advice of your First Supervisor,

in which case s/he will state on the form that you are submitting for assessment against their advice.

Once submitted your dissertation or thesis will be checked to ensure that the format is acceptable and you will be asked to sign a declaration relating to its contents.

All exceptional assessment arrangements must be referred by your Faculty Research Degrees Committee for approval by the University Research Degrees Committee before submission. Examples of such exceptional arrangements include:

- the oral examination being held at a location outside the University
- an assessment method other than an oral examination and thesis/dissertation
- the submission of the thesis/dissertation in a language other than English
- the examination of the thesis/dissertation in a language other than English

Once the First Supervisor's statement has been received by your Faculty your thesis/dissertation will usually be sent to examiners within two working days.

3.16.2   Preparing for Your Oral Examination/Viva Voce
The Graduate Research School offer a session, 'Preparing for your Viva' – refer to Canvas for upcoming dates. A useful training film called **'The Good Viva Video'** is also available on the Advice and Guidance page from the Graduate Research School area on Canvas.

3.16.3   Practice Oral Examination/Viva Voce
As part of your personal training programme, you will be given an opportunity to take part in a structured defence of your work, usually with an assessor independent of your supervisory team. This will normally be a practice oral examination, although other formats may be used as appropriate (e.g. seminar presentation). This is intended to provide you with practice in presenting and defending your research to the wider academic community before undertaking formal assessment of your dissertation or thesis.

Guidance given at the practice is for feedback only and is not necessarily an indication of the questions you will be asked at your examination. The outcome of the exercise will not prejudice the actual assessment of your dissertation or thesis and will not form part of the final assessment. An assessor used for the practice exercise should not subsequently be appointed as an examiner.

3.16.4   Arranging the Oral Examination/Viva Voce
Your First Supervisor will arrange the oral examination. *It is not your responsibility to take any part in arranging the examination.* Most oral examinations take place within three months of submission for PhD and MPhil and within two months for MA/MSc by Research. It may take place in person at Kingston, or online, or as a combination of the two. Please discuss which format is appropriate for you with your supervisor.

3.16.5   Before your Oral Examination/Viva Voce
Examiners are asked to provide a **preliminary independent assessment** of your dissertation/ thesis and to return a form stating one of the following recommendations:

- the oral examination should be held without further changes to the dissertation/thesis

- the content of thesis/dissertation is not of a satisfactory standard to be considered for the degree and the candidate should be allowed to resubmit the work for reassessment after corrections. In this case the candidate and the First Supervisor will be informed and given detailed advice about the requirements for resubmission.

3.16.6   The Oral Examination/Viva Voce

The oral examination will normally be held at the University if it is a face-to-face viva. Approval to hold the examination elsewhere must be obtained from the University Research Degrees Committee at the time of appointment of examiners. You will be notified by email of the time and location of your oral examination. If you are unable to attend through illness or other circumstances beyond your control, it is your responsibility to inform your First Supervisor and/or your Faculty Research Student Co-ordinator at the earliest opportunity. Normally, the examination will be postponed and new arrangements made.

An Independent Chair will be appointed by your faculty to ensure that your examination is conducted fairly and in accordance with Kingston University regulations and procedures.

Your examiners will determine the most appropriate format for your oral examination in accordance with University regulations. The most common format for the oral examination is as follows:

- private meeting of the examiners to agree questions
- candidate examined. The First Supervisor is normally present at this part of the examination. This is entirely at your discretion and, if you would be more comfortable if they did not attend, please inform your Faculty Research Student Co-ordinator. The First Supervisor should not normally participate unless invited to do so by the examiners
- private meeting of the examiners to discuss final recommendations
- informal feedback, including result, to candidate (and First Supervisor)

Exceptionally, the University Research Degrees Committee may approve a form of assessment other than an oral examination.

All examiners must participate in the oral examination. Usually the external examiner will lead the discussion.

Afterwards they will be asked to provide a joint recommendation to the University Research Degrees Committee

3.16.7   Possible Outcomes of Your Oral Examination/Viva Voce

After your examination the examiners will normally reach agreement on a recommendation. Where examiners cannot agree, they are permitted to make independent recommendations.

The following recommendations are available to examiners:

- **Pass** - the candidate has reached the required standard and may be conferred with the award
- **Minor amendments** - the candidate has reached the required standard and should be conferred with the award subject to minor amendments to the thesis/dissertation by a

specified date (amendments are usually made within 3 months and relatively small in nature, e.g. amending grammar or some phrasing, or requiring small textual changes or additions)

- **Major amendments** - the candidate must complete major amendments, normally within six months, to the satisfaction of the examiners in order to allow the award of the PhD. In this instance the examiners must supply a jointly agreed list of amendments.
- **Resubmission** - [note that this option is not available if the candidate resubmitted before the oral examination took place] the candidate has not yet reached the required standard for the award, but should be permitted one further assessment opportunity, which can be defined as:
  - re-submission of the thesis/dissertation and its defence in a second oral examination
  - re-submission of a revised thesis/dissertation without a further oral examination
  - a second oral examination without significant change to the thesis/dissertation
- **Lower Award** the candidate has failed to reach the standard for the award but should be conferred with a lower award. See the regulations in Sections 6-9 for details.
- **Fail** - the candidate has failed to reach the standard for the award and should not be offered an opportunity for reassessment.

The examiners' recommendations, whether joint or independent, will be forwarded to the Graduate Research School for formal ratification by the University Research Degrees Committee (the body responsible for conferring the award).

If the examiners have not agreed a joint recommendation, the University Research Degrees Committee may:

- accept the recommendation of the majority of the examiners, provided that the majority includes at least one external examiner
- accept the recommendation of the external examiner
- require the appointment of a new external examiner to conduct both stages of the assessment process and to make an independent recommendation to the University Research Degrees Committee

The outcome of your assessment is not confirmed until the University Research Degrees Committee has approved it. In the meantime, you will be sent a letter detailing the recommendations made by the examiners, including any amendments that they require you to make to your thesis/dissertation.

3.16.8   Amendments
If you are required to make amendments (minor or major) to your thesis/dissertation as a condition of the award you may be given a list at the time of your oral assessment, or your examiners may append them to their recommendations. The Graduate Research School will send you details of the amendments to be made and the date by which you must complete them.

Amendments for the MA/MSc by Research should normally be completed within one month of the oral examination. For the PhD and MPhil, amendments should normally be completed within three months of the oral examination.

When you have made your amendments you should submit the amended thesis/dissertation to your Faculty Research Student Co-ordinator .

The examiner/s will review your amendments and will confirm to the Graduate Research School in writing whether they have been completed to their satisfaction.

3.16.9 Resubmission (also referred to as reassessment)
A candidate may be reassessed on one occasion only. The form of the re-assessment will be stipulated by the University Research Degrees Committee in the light of the examiners' recommendations.

Normally, where the examiners have recommended that a thesis assessed for MPhil or PhD needs significant rewriting, you will be given twelve months to do this. For MA/MSc by Research, you will normally be given a maximum of four months.

Reassessment is subject to the same administrative processes as the initial assessment, for example you will need to submit your thesis through your Faculty Research Student Co-ordinator.

After resubmission of the thesis and/or oral examination (whichever components are required) the examiners will make either a joint recommendation or independent recommendations in the same way as for initial assessment. The following recommendations are available to examiners after reassessment:

- that the candidate has reached the required standard and may be conferred with the award
- that the candidate has reached the required standard and may be conferred with the award subject to amendments to the thesis/dissertation by a specified date
- for PhD candidates only: the candidate has failed to reach the standard for the award but should be conferred with a lower award. See Sections 6-9 Regulations for details
- that the candidate has failed to reach the standard for the degree and there will be no further opportunity for reassessment

3.16.10 Submitting Your Final Approved Thesis or Dissertation
Once the examiners have approved your amendments you will be asked to submit a final version of your thesis/dissertation. Kingston University supports electronic only submission. Where necessary a hard copy may be submitted as well as, or, in exceptional cases, instead of an electronic copy. Your final approved thesis or dissertation must be identical in format to that approved by the examiner(s).

Participating in electronic submission improves access to your research findings, increases usage and lends support to the principle of open-access. If you have any queries, please contact the Graduate Research School.

Conferment of your award is dependent on the submission of your final approved thesis or dissertation, incorporating any corrections required by the examiners, for the KU Research Repository (which must be submitted to the Graduate Research School) or Library.

Instructions for how to submit your final version will be sent to you once the examination process has been completed.

Please note that the title on your final approved thesis or dissertation should be the same as the title listed when your examination arrangements were approved, otherwise it will not be accepted. Any changes must be approved by your examiners.

If you need to submit a hard copy of your thesis, for example, for copyright reasons, please follow these instructions:

- the binding must be of a fixed, permanent type so that pages cannot be removed or replaced.
- the front and rear boards must be strong enough to support the weight of the work when standing upright
- the outside boards and spine should be blue or black
- the outside front board must have the following information, in gold lettering, in at least 24 point type: the title of the thesis/dissertation; the name (surname and initials) of the author; the award (MA, MSc, MPhil or PhD); the year of submission (when you submitted your thesis /dissertation for examination) or resubmission
- the spine of the work must show, reading downwards: the candidate's name; the award (MA, MSc, MPhil, PhD, DBA or EdD); the year of submission or resubmission
- see Section 3 for guidance on formatting your thesis or dissertation

The University does not have a recommended binding service but details of local binderies and a website used by previous postgraduate researchers are given below. Please be sure to allow plenty of time for binding.

Mail Boxes Etc. (please first check that they can bind your thesis thickness)
61 Victoria Road, Surbiton, Surrey, KT6 4JX https://www.mbe.co.uk/surbiton/print

www.mythesis.co.uk

Gray's (Bookbinders) Ltd, Windsor House, 26 Willow Lane, Mitcham, Surrey CR4 4NA
http://www.graysbbb.co.uk/

3.16.11 EThOS
Kingston University participates in a British Library-funded project called EThOS (http://ethos.bl.uk/). Its aim is to digitise a large number of PhD theses currently held in university libraries and to make these freely available to the research community. When you are ready to submit your thesis you will be sent instructions as to how to submit your thesis electronically. If you have any queries, please don't hesitate to contact the Library via ethos@kingston.ac.uk
Note: as at Sept 2024, the British Library's EThOS repository for UK PhD theses is still unavailable after a serious ransomware attack late last year.

3.16.12 Research Repository
The Kingston University Research Repository (http://eprints.kingston.ac.uk/) is a major channel for the promotion of research outputs from the University. All research theses and dissertations are recorded on the repository and the full text is added as a PDF. You can read previous students' theses by going to the advanced search and selecting 'Thesis' under Item Type.

4. Award

4.1   Conferment of Your Research Degree

On receipt of your final approved thesis the University will arrange for formal conferment of your degree by the University Research Degrees Committee.   The degree is then legally conferred, and you will be informed of this by email.   This part of the process usually takes up to 3 weeks but can be longer during holiday periods.

The date of your award will be the date it is approved by the Chair of the University Research Degrees Committee (not your submission or viva date).

Note, if you need your degree to be conferred by a specific date or you wish to attend a certain graduation ceremony you must allow sufficient time for the conferment process to be completed. The Graduate Research School can advise how long this may take.

4.2   Graduation Ceremonies and Degree Certificates

The conferment email will include details of how to register for your graduation ceremony, should you wish to attend. Normally degree certificates are given at the Graduation Ceremony. If you wish to have your certificate before then, it may be collected or sent to you by arrangement with the Development, Alumni Relations and Engagement Office.
https://www.kingston.ac.uk/alumni/

4.3   Your student account after award

Once your award has been formally conferred your student account will close after 3 months, including your email account. Please be sure to move any important information or contacts before your account closes.

5. Researcher Development Programme

As a postgraduate researcher, you are expected to develop generic, transferable and discipline-specific skills during your studies.

The Graduate Research School offers a core training and development programme for postgraduate researchers, designed not only to develop the skills you will need to complete your degree programme, but also to develop skills that will be valuable to you in your future career. Feedback from previous participants has been very positive. Core training sessions are compulsory, and others are optional. We strongly encourage you to make the most of these opportunities. In addition to the core programme, each Faculty typically runs disciplinary-specific research training events and training. Check for updates on our Canvas site.

5.1   Researcher Development Framework by Vitae

Vitae, the national organisation funded by Research Councils UK to champion the personal, professional and career development of doctoral researchers and research staff, has developed a framework to describe the skills and experience a typical postgraduate researcher should aspire to. It can be accessed via the Vitae website:
https://www.vitae.ac.uk/researchers-professional-development/about-the-vitae-researcher-development-framework

5.2   UEA Online Training Series for PGRs

We have subscribed to the very well-regarded online training programme run by the University of East Anglia. Training sessions are delivered via a virtual classroom, mostly on weekday evenings between 7pm-9pm, but with some additional daytime sessions. It has been organised into five modules, each focused on a specific area/topic, including 3 or 4 individual sessions. Sessions must be booked in advance. Booking opens 3 weeks before the session runs. More information is on the GRS Canvas module. Book a place here:
https://bookwhen.com/ueaonlinetraining

> Module 1: Academic Writing
> Module 2: Qualitative Research Skills
> Module 3: Finishing your PhD
> Module 4: Teaching Skills
> Module 5: Quantitative Research Skills

5.3   Personal Development Planning (PDP)

It is important to discuss your training needs with your supervisor. We recommend that you create a Personal Development Plan to help identify training objectives and monitor progress. If you are interested in finding out more about this process, a template is available on the Researcher Development Programme page from the Graduate Research School Canvas module.

5.4   Kingston Research Structured Programme

A list of the skills development sessions offered by the Graduate Research School is available on Canvas. The core elements are compulsory, while others are optional. Further details will be emailed to you when dates and times are confirmed. You can also check the information on the Training and Development page from the Graduate Research School area on Canvas. Please check this page regularly for updates and new events.

5.5   Epigeum Online Research Skills Training

A wide range of online research training modules are available, covering research integrity, research ethics and research methods. This is provided by Epigeum, part of Oxford University Press.

https://kingstonuniversity.sharepoint.com/sites/mykingston/myuni/GRS/Pages/Epigeum.aspx

5.6   Discover Workshops from the Library

The library run workshops throughout the year which cover skills such as using the catalogues and the appropriate referencing system for your subject area, but also research specific skills such as using REFWorks and the research repository. These can be booked on KU Extra. Filter by Type and select Library Workshop to see the current schedule.

https://kingstonuniversity.sharepoint.com/sites/mykingston/library/Pages/Supporting-you.aspx

5.7   General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) Training

GDPR is covered in our core training sessions, but if you are applying for Ethics approval you will also need to complete the online course *Data Protection – researchers*

https://kingstonuniversity.sharepoint.com/sites/mykingston/myuni/randr/data-protection/GDPR-for-students/Pages/Data-Protection-training.aspx

5.8   LinkedIn Learning

The University's subscription to LinkedIn Learning provides you with free access to over 13,000 videos covering a very wide range of new skills, such as project management, leadership, new software, statistics analysis, developing resilience and improving your writing skills.

https://kingstonuniversity.sharepoint.com/sites/mykingston/mysupport/itsupport/lynda

5.9   International and Abroad Students

Postgraduate researchers based overseas are expected to attend all core sessions and the appropriate optional sessions, as agreed with your First Supervisor. We now offer many sessions online or with hybrid attendance.

International Students with student visas – please be aware of the rules regarding your supervision evidence requirements for the UK Border Agency. These change, so please refer to current advice:

https://kingstonuniversity.sharepoint.com/sites/mykingston/mysupport/international/Pages/default.aspx

5.10   Teaching

If you are given the opportunity to become involved in teaching at the University, you will be required to attend a training session at the appropriate level. More information will be sent to you at the time. Please note that opportunities for teaching are not guaranteed.

5.11   Applying for funding

There are sessions within the training programme covering how to apply for external funding, and the processes you will need to follow. If you would like to apply for a specific grant or funding opportunity your supervisor must contact their Research Development Manager as early as possible to guide the application through the internal and external processes and approvals.

It is importance that any grants held in the university's name are managed through the university's financial processes. The Research Development Manager must be informed of any applications.

5.12   Employability Skills

The Careers and Employability Service provides all postgraduate researchers with careers and employability support and can help you develop skills such as networking, using effective body language, preparing for interviews and job applications, and making the most of transferable skills http://www.kingston.ac.uk/careers

5.13   Personal Development Workshops

The Student Wellbeing Group offer a range of health and wellbeing services, including workshops covering, for example, stress management and anxiety. More information is available on Canvas. See also Section 11.

5.14   Staff Development

Postgraduate Researchers who teach are also welcome to attend KU staff development training. You can access the resources using your staff Unified account or see online resources on the Staff Development page:
https://kingstonuniversity.sharepoint.com/sites/staffspace/dep/humanresources/LD/Pages/default.aspx

If you do not teach but would like to attend staff development training, please contact staffdev@kingston.ac.uk to request access to a course.

5.15   Research Networks

All postgraduate researchers are encouraged to join internal and external networks and organisations, as appropriate to the research discipline or field. Your supervisors will be able to advise you how to get involved.

5.16   Other Forms of Training and Development

Training and development comes in many different forms and is not restricted to formal sessions delivered by the University or your faculty. For example, your supervisors may provide you with research methods training during your supervisory meetings; you may attend conferences and workshops in your field; or you may need to undertake specialist technical training.

6. MA/MSc By Research Regulations and Standards

6.1   Standard of the Award

The standard of the MA or MSc by Research is that expected of a good honours graduate who has achieved a minimum of 180 credits at M level by:
- critically investigating and evaluating an appropriate topic, and
- presenting and defending a dissertation to the satisfaction of the examiners.

6.2   Period of Registration

The normal period of registration is:
- Full-time: 1 year from first enrolment date
- Part-time: 2 years from first enrolment date

Candidates registered for an MA/MSc by Research should normally have completed their programme of study and presented their dissertation for examination within this timeframe.

The minimum period of registration for an MA/MSc by Research is the same as the normal period of registration listed above.

6.3   Timeline

The table below shows the progression of a normal MA/MSc by Research across the registration period, from beginning to end. Each stage, apart from the submission deadline, is conditional upon satisfactory progress and the approval of your FRDC and the URDC. Any approved suspensions will result in the timings being increased by the duration of the suspension.

Event	Timing: Full-time	Timing: Part-time
Enrol on MA/MSc by Research	Start of registration period	Start of registration period
Keep agreed records of meetings	At least monthly	Approx. every 6 weeks
Mid term monitoring	6 months	12 months
Submission of dissertation for examination - deadline	12 months	24 months
Oral Examination	Date agreed with examiners	Date agreed with examiners
Amendments completed if applicable	Deadline set by examiners	Deadline set by examiners
Final bound dissertation submitted	Deadline set by Graduate Research School	Deadline set by Graduate Research School
Conferment of award	Within 4 weeks of submission of final version thesis	Within 4 weeks of submission of final version thesis
Attendance at Graduation Ceremony if desired	Deadline for conferment set by Faculty	Deadline for conferment set by Faculty

6.4   Monitoring Requirement

You and your First Supervisor must agree as to the most appropriate means to ensure that adequate feedback is given to you on your progress and that, where possible, potential issues are identified and rectified in time to allow successful completion of the award.

A mid-term monitoring report (RD5c) should be completed 6 months (full-time) or 12 months (part-time) into the programme of study.

6.5   Dissertation/Assessment Requirement

The assessment of a candidate for an MA/MSc by Research has two elements:

- production of a dissertation
- defence of the dissertation in an oral examination

See also Section 3 of YOUR RESEARCH DEGREE: FROM ADMISSION TO ALUMNI

6.5.1   Word Count/Dissertation Length
Text should not normally exceed the following length, excluding ancillary data:

- Art & Design, Arts, Social Sciences, Education: 20,000 words
- Science, Engineering: 15,000 words

A dissertation exceeding the word limit may be deemed a fail by the examiners and the student asked to resubmit with a reduced word count. It is, however, recognised that exceptionally the length and character of the text may vary and will be determined by the aims and objectives of the submission. Exceptions may be agreed by URDC, but the final decision will reside with the examination panel. Exceptions will be very rare. Your First Supervisor will offer guidance on the subject-specific requirements for your discipline if they differ from the lengths listed above.

Included in the word count: The main text including footnotes / endnotes, tables, graphs and diagrams.

Not included in the word count: Abstract, acknowledgements, bibliography and appendices (including tables, graphs and diagrams within the appendices)

The text of an MA/MSc by research may be reduced in length if accompanied by other scholarly materials, or if the submission involves publications, creative output or preparation of a scholarly edition. In such cases, the text of the dissertation should normally be in the range of 5,000 to 10,000 words.

6.6   Award Descriptor

This descriptor comes from *The Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies, February 2024,* published by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education. It outlines the basic characteristics of study expected for a Masters award. https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code/qualifications-frameworks

Masters degrees are awarded to those who have demonstrated:

i.   a systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of their academic discipline, field of study, or area of professional practice;

ii.   a comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to their own research or advanced scholarship;

iii. originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline;

iv.   conceptual understanding that enables the candidate:

–   to evaluate critically current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline; and

–   to evaluate methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses.

Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

i.   deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, make sound judgements in the absence of complete data, and communicate their conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences;

ii.   demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level;

iii. continue to advance their knowledge and understanding, and to develop new skills to a high level;

and will have

iv.   the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring:
- the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility;
- decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations; and
- the independent learning ability required for continuing professional development.

6.7   Assessment Criteria

The scope of the dissertation should be what might reasonably be expected after 1 year full-time or 2 years part -time study. The dissertation should not normally exceed the above word limits. In each of the following areas the candidate will be expected to:

Dissertation Contents
- ensure that the contents of their dissertation result from their own independent work, and demonstrate a critical awareness of current issues and or new knowledge at the forefront of their field(s) of study and/or professional practice.

- show originality in the application of existing knowledge.

- use the dissertation to reflect a coherent research process from the acquisition of basic data to its final conclusions and provide an underlying rationale for the research which is clear and persuasive.

- show a critical appreciation of the context of the research and its relationship to existing literature and received opinion.

- apply their knowledge, skills and understanding of advanced concepts to a complex field(s) of study and/or professional practice.

- make reasoned judgements, and understand the limitations of those made in the absence of complete data and show an appreciation of the limitations of their research and an awareness of areas worthy of further investigation.

Presentation
- lay out the dissertation in a clear and readable manner with respect to both its language and structure and according to the presentation format stated (see Section 3 of YOUR RESEARCH DEGREE: FROM ADMISSION TO ALUMNI).

- make effective use of cross-references, so that the text is readily navigable in order that the reader may extract the information sought.

- use references, bibliography and any headers/footnotes, avoiding both structural and stylistic inconsistencies.

Methodology
- demonstrate that the methodologies that they have adopted and/or developed are appropriate to the research undertaken and explicitly state and justify their underlying rationale.

- demonstrate, where relevant, that they understand and can clearly articulate any ethical implications of their research study.

- adopt and articulate clear and consistent criteria for the selection of data (or textual extracts) and the results of analyses.

## 6.8	Academic Regulations

The university-wide regulations will apply to you throughout your period of registration. You should familiarise yourself with their contents:

Kingston University – General Student Regulations
http://www.kingston.ac.uk/aboutkingstonuniversity/howtheuniversityworks/policiesandregulations/

## 6.9	Regulations for the Award of Masters by Research

Regulations for specific degrees can be found on the Kingston website. They are reviewed and updated each academic year. The regulations for research degrees are collated together in AR4 Research Degree Regulations which can be found in on the university website under Policies and Regulations.
https://www.kingston.ac.uk/aboutkingstonuniversity/howtheuniversityworks/policiesandregulations/#blockid27839

7. MPhil Regulations and Standards

7.1   Standard of the Award

The standard of the MPhil is that expected of a good honours graduate who has achieved a minimum of 360 credits at M level by:
- satisfactorily completing an agreed programme of research training
- critically investigating and evaluating an appropriate topic
- presenting and defending a thesis to the satisfaction of the examiners

7.2   Period of Registration

The normal period of registration is:
- Full-time: 2 years from first enrolment date (3 years maximum)
- Part-time: 4 years from first enrolment date (6 years maximum)

Candidates should normally have presented their dissertation for examination within:
- Full-time: 2 years from first enrolment date
- Part-time: 4 years from first enrolment date

The minimum period of registration for an MPhil is:
- Full-time: 1 year from first enrolment date
- Part-time: 2 years from first enrolment date

Normally, this would only apply to those who have been granted advanced standing.

7.3   Timeline

The table below shows the progression of a normal MPhil registration from beginning to end. Each stage, apart from the submission deadline, is conditional upon satisfactory progress and the appropriate approval of your FRDC and the URDC. Any approved suspensions will result in the timings being increased by the duration of the suspension.

Event	Timing: Full-time	Timing: Part-time
Enrol on MPhil	Start of registration period	Start of registration period
Keep agreed records of meetings	At least monthly	Approx. every 6 weeks
Annual Monitoring	End of Year 1	End of Year 1
Annual Monitoring	End of each subsequent year	End of each subsequent year
Transfer to writing up (optional)	End of Year 2	End of Year 4
Submission of thesis for examination - deadline	End of Year 3	End of Year 6
Oral Examination	Date agreed with examiners	Date agreed with examiners
Amendments or resubmission completed if applicable	Deadline set by examiners	Deadline set by examiners

Final bound dissertation submitted	Deadline set by Graduate Research School	Deadline set by Graduate Research School
Conferment of award	Within 4 weeks of submission of final bound thesis	Within 4 weeks of submission of final bound thesis
Attendance at Graduation Ceremony if desired	Deadline for conferment set by Faculty	Deadline for conferment set by Faculty

7.4   Monitoring Requirement

An Annual Monitoring Report should be completed one year into the programme of study for both full-time and part-time researchers.
The main purposes of the monitoring will be to ensure that:

- the research is progressing at a satisfactory pace
- the planned personal training programme is being, or has been, completed
- any required changes to the supervisory arrangements, the student's mode of attendance or the nature of the proposed research programme, including the title, are identified and submitted for approval
- students are provided with formal feedback on their progress and given an opportunity to highlight any difficulties experienced

The monitoring report comprises three elements. You should complete the first two parts of the report in conjunction with your First Supervisor. Your First Supervisor will then complete part 3, their own report on the progress of your research:

1. Commentary on the progress of your project over the past year
2. Action Plan for the next year
3. First Supervisor's report

Your commentary must include details of any changes to your supervisory team or mode of study, as well as alterations to your research that could have ethical implications, in which case your new research plan will be subject to approval through the Faculty Research Ethics Committee.

The Faculty Research Degrees Committee will review your monitoring report and make a formal assessment of your progress.

Once the Faculty Research Degrees Committee agrees that your progress is satisfactory, you will be invited to re-enrol and continue with your research.

If your progress is not considered satisfactory, you will be informed of any conditions that you will need to fulfil in order to continue or, if necessary, be informed that your registration is being reviewed by the University (in which case you will be sent details of the review process).

Failure to demonstrate satisfactory progress could result in registration being termination under the General Student Regulations.

7.5   Thesis/Assessment Requirement

The assessment of a candidate for MPhil has two elements:

- the thesis or its equivalent, including other approved examinable material
- defence of the thesis in an oral examination

See also Section 3 of YOUR RESEARCH DEGREE: FROM ADMISSION TO ALUMNI

7.5.1   Word Count/Thesis Length

Text should not normally exceed the following length, excluding ancillary data:

- Art & Design, Arts, Social Sciences, Education: 40,000 words
- Science, Engineering: 20,000 words

A dissertation exceeding the word limit may be deemed a fail by the examiners and the student asked to resubmit with a reduced word count. It is, however, recognised that exceptionally the length and character of the text may vary and will be determined by the aims and objectives of the submission. Exceptions may be agreed by URDC, but the final decision will reside with the examination panel. Exceptions will be very rare. Your First Supervisor will offer guidance on the subject specific requirements for your discipline if they differ from the lengths listed above.

Included in the word count: The main text including foot notes / endnotes, tables, graphs and diagrams.

Not included in the word count: Abstract, acknowledgements, bibliography and appendices (including tables, graphs and diagrams within the appendices)

The text of a thesis for MPhil may be reduced in length if accompanied by publications or other scholarly materials, or if the submission involves creative output or preparation of a scholarly edition. In such cases, the text of the thesis should normally be in the range of 15,000 to 20,000 words:

7.6   Award Descriptor

This descriptor comes from The Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies, February 2024 published by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education. It outlines the basic characteristics of study expected for a Masters award. https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code/qualifications-frameworks

Masters degrees are awarded to candidates who have demonstrated:

i.   a systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of their academic discipline, field of study, or area of professional practice;

ii.   a comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to their own research or advanced scholarship;

iii. originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline;

iv. conceptual understanding that enables the candidate:

– to evaluate critically current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline; and

– to evaluate methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses.

Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

- deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, make sound judgements in the absence of complete data, and communicate their conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences;

- demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level;

- continue to advance their knowledge and understanding, and to develop new skills to a high level;

and will have

- the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring:

    – the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility;
    – decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations; and
    – the independent learning ability required for continuing professional development.

7.7   Assessment Criteria

The scope of the thesis should be what might reasonably be expected after 2-3 years full-time or 4-6 years part-time. The thesis should not normally exceed the word limits outlined above. In each of the following areas the candidate will be expected to:

Thesis Contents

- ensure that the contents of their thesis result from their own independent work, and demonstrate a critical awareness of current issues and or new knowledge at the forefront of their field(s) of study and/or professional practice.

- show originality in the application of existing knowledge.

- use the thesis to reflect a coherent research process from the acquisition of basic data to its final conclusions and provide an underlying rationale for the research which is clear and persuasive.

- show a critical appreciation of the context of the research and its relationship to existing literature and received opinion.

- apply their knowledge, skills and understanding of advanced concepts to a complex field(s) of study and/or professional practice.

- make reasoned judgements, and understand the limitations of those made in the absence of complete data and show an appreciation of the limitations of their research and an awareness of areas worthy of further investigation.

Presentation

- lay out the thesis in a clear and readable manner with respect to both its language and structure and according to the presentation format stated in Section 3 of YOUR RESEARCH DEGREE: FROM ADMISSION TO ALUMNI

- make effective use of cross-references, so that the text is readily navigable in order that the reader may extract the information sought.

- use references, bibliography and any headers/footnotes, avoiding both structural and stylistic inconsistencies.

Methodology

- demonstrate that the methodologies that they have adopted and/or developed are appropriate to the research undertaken and explicitly state and justify their underlying rationale.

- demonstrate, where relevant, that they understand and can clearly articulate any ethical implications of their research study.

- adopt and articulate clear and consistent criteria for the selection of data (or textual extracts) and the results of analyses.

7.8   Academic Regulations

The university-wide regulations will apply to you throughout your period of registration. You should familiarise yourself with their contents:

Kingston University – General Student Regulations
http://www.kingston.ac.uk/aboutkingstonuniversity/howtheuniversityworks/policiesandregulations

7.9   Regulations for the Award of MPhil

Regulations for specific degrees can be found on the Kingston website. They are reviewed and updated each academic year. The regulations for research degrees are collated together in AR4 Research Degree Regulations which can be found in on the university website under Policies and Regulations.
https://www.kingston.ac.uk/aboutkingstonuniversity/howtheuniversityworks/policiesandregulations/#blockid27839

8. PhD (including Professional Doctorates) Regulations and Standards

8.1 Standard of the Award

The standard of the PhD is that expected of a good honours graduate who:
- has satisfactorily completed an agreed programme of research training
- has critically investigated and evaluated an approved topic, resulting in a substantial independent and original contribution to knowledge, commensurate with the normal period of registration
- has presented and defended a thesis to the satisfaction of the examiners

8.2 Period of Registration

The registration period includes time spent registered as MPhil before upgrading to PhD.

The normal period of registration is:
- Full-time: 3 years from first enrolment date
- Part-time: 6 years from first enrolment date

The maximum period of registration and the deadline for candidates to have submitted their thesis for examination is:
- Full-time: 4 years from first enrolment date
- Part-time: 8 years from first enrolment date

The minimum period of registration is:
- Full-time: 1 year from first enrolment date
- Part-time: 2 years from first enrolment date

Normally, the minimum registration period would only apply to those who have been granted advanced standing.

8.3 Timeline

Event	Timing: Full-time	Timing: Part-time
Enrol as MPhil	Start of registration period	Start of registration period
Keep agreed records of meetings	At least monthly	Approx. every 6 weeks
Annual Monitoring	n/a	End of Year 1
MPhil to PhD Upgrade	End of Year 1	End of Year 2
Annual Monitoring	End of each subsequent year	End of each subsequent year
Transfer to writing up (optional)	End of Year 3	End of Year 6
Submission of thesis for examination - deadline	End of Year 4	End of Year 8
Oral Examination	Date agreed with examiners	Date agreed with examiners
Amendments or resubmission completed if applicable	Deadline set by examiners	Deadline set by examiners
Final bound dissertation submitted	Deadline set by Graduate Research School	Deadline set by Graduate Research School

Conferment of award	Within 4 weeks of submission of final bound thesis	Within 4 weeks of submission of final bound thesis
Attendance at Graduation Ceremony if desired	Deadline for conferment set by Faculty	Deadline for conferment set by Faculty

The table above shows the progression of PhD registration from beginning to end. Each stage, apart from the submission deadline, is conditional upon satisfactory progress and the appropriate approval of your FRDC and the URDC. Any approved suspensions will result in the timings being increased by the duration of the suspension.

8.4   Thesis/Assessment Requirement

See also Section 3 of YOUR RESEARCH DEGREE: FROM ADMISSION TO ALUMNI

The assessment of candidates for a PhD has two elements:

- the thesis or its equivalent, including other approved examinable material
- its defence in an oral examination

8.4.1   Word Count/Thesis Length
Text should not normally exceed the following length, excluding ancillary data:

- Art & Design, Arts, Social Sciences, Education: 80,000 words
- Science, Engineering: 40,000 words

A dissertation exceeding the word limit may be deemed a fail by the examiners and the student asked to resubmit with a reduced word count. It is, however, recognised that exceptionally the length and character of the text may vary and will be determined by the aims and objectives of the submission. Exceptions may be agreed by URDC, but the final decision will reside with the examination panel. Exceptions will be very rare. Your First Supervisor will offer guidance on the subject specific requirements for your discipline if they differ from the lengths listed above.

Included in the word count: The main text including footnotes / endnotes, tables, graphs and diagrams.

Not included in the word count: Abstract, acknowledgements, bibliography and appendices (including tables, graphs and diagrams within the appendices)

The text may be reduced in length if accompanied by other scholarly materials, or if the submission involves publications, creative output or preparation of a scholarly edition. In such cases, the critical element of the thesis should normally be in the range of 30,000 to 40,000 words, with a minimum of 20,000 words. This includes PhDs in Creative Writing.

8.5 Monitoring Requirements and Upgrade from MPhil to PhD

8.5.1 Upgrade from MPhil to PhD

The University Research Degree Regulations require that all doctoral researchers are registered in the first instance for an MPhil degree and upgrade, if appropriate, to the PhD degree following an independent review of their progress and approval from the Faculty Research Degrees Committee.

Upgrade for full-time students should normally be made within 9-12 months of enrolment and for part-time students between 18-24 months from the date of enrolment. For those beginning their degrees outside the standard enrolment points of March and October, timings may be adjusted slightly to fit the review cycle. Once this review process is successfully completed your registration will be transferred to the degree of PhD.

Note: for students undertaking the 1+3 PhD in the Business School, the MSc assessment will act as the upgrade assessment. Students should refer to the course handbook for further details.

The section below summarises the upgrade process. It should be read in conjunction with the full guidance, available on My Kingston in document *RD6 MPhil to PhD Upgrade: Guidance Notes For Candidates And Staff.*

Before completing your first year of research you will be required to complete a **written report** and undertake **an upgrade/transfer presentation or viva**.

The **written report** comprises the following elements:

Form RD5b. You must complete this to report the progress that you have made with your research, the training that you have undertaken, and the research plan that you propose for the following year.

Supporting Documentation. You must supply this to demonstrate how your future research will meet the criteria for PhD and contribute to new knowledge. Supporting documentation will vary according to the type of project being undertaken. It could, for example, comprise an account of early experimental work, a detailed review of existing literature, a critical account of existing models, or other work that your First Supervisor agrees relevant to the successful development of your research project. As a rough guide, supporting documentation will normally be between 3,000 & 6,000 words long and must include a timetable for the completion of your project. Your report should indicate any changes to arrangements, such as changes to your supervisory team, intended thesis format or of mode of study and any changes to your research that may have ethical implications. Your First Supervisor will add an additional short report on your progress and Action Plan.

Upgrade Presentation. The format of the upgrade presentation will depend on your faculty's procedures; more details will be given to you by your Faculty Research Student Co-ordinator. Your First Supervisor will advise you of what is expected of you and how to prepare.

An independent reviewer will assess your written report, supporting documentation and presentation and will report on your progress to the Faculty Research Degrees Committee, which will recommend one of the following to the URDC:

- that registration should be upgraded to PhD
- that registration may be upgraded subject to some modifications or additional work being completed by a specified date
- that there is insufficient evidence that the planned work will meet the standard for PhD and the candidate should remain registered for the degree of MPhil
- that progress is insufficient for the degree of MPhil and the registration should be terminated

It is a condition of your continued registration for both MPhil and PhD that you complete an Annual Monitoring Report at the end of each subsequent year of your research (for both full-time and part-time researchers).

8.5.2   Annual Monitoring Report

The main purposes of subsequent reports will be to ensure that:
- the research is progressing at a satisfactory pace
- the planned personal training programme is being, or has been, completed
- any required changes to the supervisory arrangements, to your mode of attendance or the nature of the proposed research programme, including the title, are identified and submitted for approval
- to provide formal feedback on your progress and give you an opportunity to highlight any difficulties experienced

The Annual Monitoring Report comprises three elements. You should complete the first two parts of the report in conjunction with your First Supervisor. Your First Supervisor will then complete their own report on the progress of your research:
- Commentary on the progress of your project over the past 12 months
- Action Plan for the next 12 months
- First Supervisor's report

Your commentary must include details of any changes to your supervisory team or mode of study, as well as alterations to your research that could have ethical implications, in which case your new research plan will be subject to approval through the Faculty Research Ethics Committee.

The Faculty Research Degrees Committee will review your monitoring report and make a formal assessment of your progress.

Once the Faculty Research Degrees Committee agrees that your progress is satisfactory, you will be invited to re-enrol and continue with your research.

If your progress is not considered satisfactory, you will be informed of any conditions that you will need to fulfil in order to continue or, if necessary, be informed that your registration is being reviewed by the University (in which case you will be sent details of the review process).

Failure to demonstrate satisfactory progress could result in registration being terminated under the General Student Regulations.

8.6   Award Descriptor

This descriptor comes from The Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies, February 2024 published by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education. It outlines the basic characteristics of study expected for a Doctorate.
https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code/qualifications-frameworks

Doctorates are awarded to candidates who have demonstrated:

i.   the creation and interpretation of new knowledge, through original research or other advanced scholarship, of a quality to satisfy peer review, extend the forefront of the discipline, and merit publication;

ii. a systematic acquisition and understanding of a substantial body of knowledge which is at the forefront of an academic discipline or area of professional practice;

iii. the general ability to conceptualise, design and implement a project for the generation of new knowledge, applications or understanding at the forefront of the discipline, and to adjust the project design in the light of unforeseen problems;

iv. a detailed understanding of applicable techniques for research and advanced academic enquiry.

Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

- make informed judgements on complex issues in specialist fields, often in the absence of complete data, and be able to communicate their ideas and conclusions clearly and effectively to specialist and non-specialist audiences;

- continue to undertake pure and/or applied research and development at an advanced level, contributing substantially to the development of new techniques, ideas, or approaches;

and will have:

- the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and largely autonomous initiative in complex and unpredictable situations, in professional or equivalent environments.

8.7 Assessment Criteria

The scope of the thesis should be what might reasonably be expected after 3-4 years full-time or 6-8 years part-time study. The thesis should not normally exceed the word limits outlined above. With regard to the structure and nature of the thesis, in each of the following areas the candidate will be expected to:

Thesis contents

- ensure that the contents of their thesis result from their own independent work, represent a new, substantial and original contribution to the field(s) of study and/or professional practice as evidenced by the discovery of new facts or by the exercise of independent critical analysis.

- ensure the research is of a quality able to satisfy peer review and merit publication in whole, in part or in a revised form.

- use the thesis to reflect a coherent research process from the acquisition of basic data to its final conclusions and provide an underlying rationale for the research which is clear and persuasive.

- show a critical appreciation of the context of the research, its relationship to existing literature and received opinion.

- apply their knowledge, skills and understanding of key concepts to a complex field(s) of study and/or professional practice.

- make reasoned judgements, possibly in the absence of complete data and show an appreciation of the limitations of their research and of areas worthy of further investigation.

Presentation

- lay out the thesis in a clear and readable manner with respect to both its language and structure and according to the presentation format stated in section 3 of this handbook.

- make effective use of cross-references, so that the text is readily navigable in order that the reader may extract the information sought.

- use references, bibliography and any headers/footnotes, avoiding both structural and stylistic inconsistencies

Methodology

- demonstrate that the methodologies that they have adopted and/or developed are appropriate to the research undertaken and explicitly state and justify their underlying rationale.

- demonstrate, where relevant, that they understand and can clearly articulate any ethical implications of their research study.

- adopt and articulate clear and consistent criteria for the selection of data (or textual extracts) and the results of analyses.

8.8   Academic Regulations

The university-wide regulations will apply to you throughout your period of registration. You should familiarise yourself with their contents:

Kingston University – General Student Regulations
http://www.kingston.ac.uk/aboutkingstonuniversity/howtheuniversityworks/policiesandregulations/

8.9   Regulations for the Award of PhD

Regulations for specific degrees can be found on the Kingston website. They are reviewed and updated each academic year. The regulations for research degrees are collated together in AR4 Research Degree Regulations which can be found in on the university website under Policies and Regulations.
https://www.kingston.ac.uk/aboutkingstonuniversity/howtheuniversityworks/policiesandregulations/#blockid25684

9. Code of Practice: Responsibilities of the University, Postgraduate Researchers and Supervisors

This section of the handbook outlines, as a code of practice, the responsibilities that the University has to its postgraduate researchers and that postgraduate researchers and supervisors have to each other. These guidelines are minimum expected standards and may be supplemented by additional local agreements between postgraduate researchers and members of their supervisory team.

9.1   Your Responsibilities as a Postgraduate Researcher

As a postgraduate researcher at Kingston University you are required to:

1. commit an appropriate amount of time to your research

2. undertake a programme of training for research and transferable skills to be agreed and updated annually with your First Supervisor

3. maintain a personal training log that will be used to inform your Annual Monitoring Report

4. agree a schedule of meetings and other contact with your First Supervisor and supervisor(s) during term-time and University vacations throughout your registration

5. prepare and keep a record of the meeting, agreed with your First Supervisor, after each scheduled meeting

6. discuss with your First Supervisor and supervisor(s) the type of guidance and comment that you find most helpful

7. seek advice from your First Supervisor and supervisor(s) in a proactive way, recognising that you have a responsibility to raise appropriate topics including any difficulties or problems

8. maintain the progress of your work in accordance with plans agreed with your First Supervisor and supervisor(s) at your mid-term/upgrade/annual monitoring reviews

9. provide appropriate written work for comment and discussion within timescales agreed between you and your supervisory team

10. take note of guidance and feedback on your work provided by your supervisory team

11. inform your supervisory team of other individuals with whom your research is being discussed so that this may be taken into account when nominating examiners

12. comply with the General Regulations of the University, the codes of conduct and best practice that apply to research undertaken within it, and the specific academic regulations that apply to your award

13. comply with the regulations relating to any studentship or other award that you may hold

14. respect the intellectual property rights of members of your supervisory team in external outputs of any form (e.g. publications, patents etc.) arising from the research

15. conduct your work at all times in accordance with University and departmental safety requirements

16. follow ethical guidance provided by the University through the Research Ethics Committee and/or your supervisory team and refer to your Faculty Research Ethics Committee any changes to your research that may have ethical implications

17. inform your First Supervisor, in good time, of occasions when you plan to be away from the University for more than two weeks if full-time, or one month if part-time

18. complete a mid-term/upgrade/annual monitoring report, including an action plan, in consultation with your First Supervisor and submit it by the published deadline for consideration by the Faculty Research Degrees Committee

19. commit to completing your research and submitting your thesis/dissertation within the period defined by the University's regulations for your award

20. provide your First Supervisor with a complete draft of your thesis/dissertation in good time, to allow for comment and feedback and any corrections to be made before your period of registration expires

21. decide when to submit your thesis/dissertation, having due regard for the fact that your First Supervisor will be asked to state in writing whether or not they support the submission of your thesis/dissertation for assessment.

22. contribute to the research environment of your School or Faculty by taking up opportunities to present work at research seminars etc. and by engaging in discussion with other researchers

9.2 The Responsibilities of Your First Supervisor

Your First Supervisor is your principal supervisor and is required to:

1. have the necessary knowledge and expertise to supervise your project in co-operation with the other appointed supervisor(s)

2. keep his/her skills and knowledge up to date through professional development

3. agree the respective roles of individual supervisors with you and your supervisory team

4. give clear guidance about the nature of research and the standard expected; guide you in planning your research programme; provide information about literature and sources and encourage you to keep abreast of all relevant developments within your academic discipline

5. help you select a citation style appropriate to your discipline and project at an early stage in your research

6. ensure that you are aware of and comply with all relevant regulations and monitoring arrangements, as well as regulations attached to any scholarship or studentship that you hold

7. contribute to the assessment of your development needs and help you to develop transferable skills appropriate to your level of study. For example, by arranging for you to discuss your work at research seminars, or helping you to prepare conference papers or articles for publication

8. give detailed advice on the necessary completion dates of successive stages of your work, agreeing objectives for each stage so that your thesis/dissertation can be submitted for assessment within the specified time

9. maintain contact with you through regular supervisory meetings and other types of structured communication, as appropriate. You and your First Supervisor must agree the frequency and nature of such contact. Contact may vary according to the stage of your project, your mode of study, and the academic discipline within which you work. One scheduled contact a month, throughout the calendar year, is a suggested acceptable minimum for a full-time postgraduate researcher. Contact with part-time postgraduate researchers, whilst expected to be less frequent, should still take place regularly and to an agreed schedule.

10. agree the Supervisory Meeting Record, prepared by you and circulated to any other supervisors, after each scheduled meeting

11. be accessible to you at other times by arrangement, where advice is required on academic or personal concerns which may affect your studies

12. maintain effective communication with other members of your supervisory team throughout your period of registration

13. inform you and other members of your supervisory team should they plan to be away from the University for more than three weeks and make arrangements with other supervisors to ensure that you receive appropriate support in their absence

14. provide advice on writing up your work throughout your project, requesting written work as appropriate, and returning such work with constructive critical comments within a reasonable time. As a guide, it is suggested that this should be within four weeks for full-time postgraduate researchers, or a longer time, acknowledged to you at the time of submission, if the volume of work submitted is such that more than four weeks is required. For part-time postgraduate researchers the timescale may be longer but should not be double.

15. advise you on matters of confidentiality or ethical considerations relating to your research in terms of techniques, sources or results

16. ensure that you are aware of other sources of advice, support and guidance, both within the institution and externally

17. inform you promptly if the progress or standard of your work is unsatisfactory and arrange a plan of supportive action

18. work with you to complete your mid-term/upgrade/annual monitoring report and forward this for consideration by the Faculty Research Degrees Committee within agreed timescales

19. respect your contribution and intellectual property rights in external outputs of any form (e.g. publications, patents etc.) arising from the research

20. help you to interact with others working in your field of research

21. ensure that the correct safety procedures are followed when using equipment or laboratory materials

22. assist your Head of School to select suitable examiners for your thesis/dissertation

23. ensure that the application for approval of examination arrangements is presented to the Faculty Research Degrees Committee in good time and before your thesis/dissertation is submitted for assessment

24. provide advice on writing up your thesis/dissertation

25. read a complete draft of your thesis/dissertation and provide detailed comments

26. sign a form at the point of submission of your thesis/dissertation, expressing their support for it, and stating that it is ready for assessment in terms of content and presentation. If they do not support your submission, they must make clear to you their reservations and indicate on the form that you are submitting your thesis/dissertation against their advice

27. make the arrangements for your oral examination in liaison with the examiners

28. support you in making any amendments that the examiners require to your dissertation /thesis

29. continue to supervise you if your thesis/dissertation is referred for resubmission and give you appropriate support in revising your thesis/dissertation in light of the detailed recommendations of the examiners.

9.3 The Responsibilities of Your Second or Additional Supervisors

The University requires each postgraduate researcher to have at least one additional supervisor. The role of this supervisor will vary. S/he may be appointed to provide general expertise, for example, where a First Supervisor has not previously supervised a postgraduate researcher to completion, or to provide particular academic and/or technical expertise on an aspect of your research project. Your additional supervisor may be located at another institution. If, for example, you are based primarily overseas s/he may provide local supervision to supplement the work of a First Supervisor based at the University, or if your research involves a collaborating institution s/he may work within that collaborating institution. In general terms, additional supervisors are required to:

1. support the work of your First Supervisor and other members of your supervisory team, providing relevant expertise

2. agree with you, your First Supervisor and any other supervisors on the nature and scope of their contribution to the project, and provide the agreed level of support

3. maintain good communication with the other members of the supervisory team concerning your progress

4. make arrangements with you and your First Supervisor to ensure that there is appropriate supervisory support available to you on occasions when your First Supervisor is absent from the University for more than three weeks

5. be accessible to you at arranged times, where advice is required on academic or personal concerns which may affect your studies, usually when your First Supervisor is unavailable

6. read and sign your mid-term/upgrade/annual monitoring reports within agreed timescales; or work with you to complete your mid-term/upgrade/annual monitoring report and forward this to the Faculty Research Degrees Committee within the agreed timescales on occasions if your First Supervisor is unavailable during the monitoring process.

9.4   The University's Responsibility to its Postgraduate Researchers

Kingston University will:

1. provide access to an appropriate research environment, in the University or at an approved external facility to support your research programme

2. appoint a supervisory team with appropriate expertise and experience

3. monitor the quality of experience of postgraduate researchers at the University and act where possible to enhance this

4. provide opportunities for you to put forward your views to the University and respond to these in a timely fashion

5. have a clear and transparent process for dealing with complaints.

10. Facilities and Services for Postgraduates

10.1   The University
The main switchboard number for Kingston University is 020 8417 9000 and from overseas +44 20 8417 9000.

10.2   Library Services
Postgraduate researchers have access to the University's range of library and IT services. For full details of these services please see:
www.kingston.ac.uk/postgraduate/study-resources/

Practical information is also available via the Library webpages on My Kingston:
https://kingstonuniversity.sharepoint.com/sites/mykingston/library/Pages/default.aspx

Your subject librarian will be happy to help you and is available for one-to-one appointments. If the KU library does not hold the particular books or journals you need, you can request them from other libraries, including the British Library.

10.2.1   British Library
You may wish to register for a Reader Pass to access the British Library reading room.
https://www.bl.uk/research/

10.2.2   SCONUL
All staff and students of Kingston University can join SCONUL Access. This is a scheme run by The Society of College, National and University Libraries (SCONUL) which allows university library users to borrow or use books and journals at other libraries which belong to the scheme. The scheme covers most of the university libraries in the UK and Ireland, including, for example, the library at Tate, Imperial College library and the LSE library.
http://www.sconul.ac.uk/sconul-access

10.2.3   Library workshops
The library run regular tutorials to help researchers get the most out of the resources and services on offer, training in using referencing software and more. More information is on the library pages:
https://kingstonuniversity.sharepoint.com/sites/mykingston/library/Pages/Supporting-you.aspx

10.3   IT Services
If you require IT support, please call or email the Service Desk: Tel: 020 8417 3355 Mon-Fri 8am-6.30pm. Email: servicedesk@kingston.ac.uk
First line support in person is provided by Library staff on each campus.
You can also log a call online without needing to be logged in by going to:
http://www.kingston.ac.uk/support/

10.4   The Kingston Uni Apps
Access University information and services such as live bus information, KU email, Canvas, Library account, catalogue and opening times, PC availability, IT Support, One Drive, campus maps, and more
https://www.kingston.ac.uk/information-and-technology-services/apps/

10.5 Email

All students have access to email via Outlook Web Access. It is KU policy that ALL official email correspondence should be via KU email addresses, so you must check your KU email regularly. Staff will use this to contact you with essential information and all library communication, announcements, training information etc will be sent to your KU address.

Instructions for setting up a rule to forward emails from your KU address to an external address can be found on My Kingston: [https://kingstonuniversity.sharepoint.com/sites/mykingston/Pages/Main%20News/emailauto forward.aspx](https://kingstonuniversity.sharepoint.com/sites/mykingston/Pages/Main%20News/emailautoforward.aspx)

Your email address will be your K number eg K1234567@kingston.ac.uk. PGR students can request a 'name alias' is set up giving you an address using your name instead of your K number by contacting the service desk on ext 63355 or through the IT Service Desk Portal: https://portal.kingston.ac.uk/HEAT/Modules/SelfService/

10.6 My Desktop Anywhere

For full details about how to access your remote desktop offsite, including email, please see: https://kingstonuniversity.sharepoint.com/sites/mykingston/mysupport/itsupport/Pages/My-Desktop-Anywhere.aspx

10.7 Web Profile

All doctoral students must set up a web profile. Please follow this link to get started: https://www.kingston.ac.uk/student-profiles/

As well as basic contact information your profile may include:
• Areas of research interest (up to 10)
• Project title
• Abstract
• Supervisor 1 and 2
• Short biography of yourself
• Qualifications
• Any funding or awards you have received
• Web links (eg LinkedIn, personal website or blog)
• Publications
• Profile image

If you have any problems, for example if your supervisor is not appearing on the drop down list, please email the webteam@kingston.ac.uk for advice.

Once completed your profile will be available here: http://www.kingston.ac.uk/research/research-degrees/research-degree-students/

10.8 Student's Union

Kingston University Students' Union (KUSU) runs various student societies and, as a source of independent advice and support, can help you if you face academic problems, such as disciplinary action. For details see:
www.kingston.ac.uk/postgraduate/student-support/student-union

10.9 Healthcare, Wellbeing and Counselling

The University's Student Wellbeing team offer a wide range of services to students, including: drop-in advice sessions, sports injuries clinics, health advice and vaccinations, drug and alcohol advice, sexual health clinics, complementary therapies, free counselling and stress management workshops, life coaching, stopping smoking, lunch time seminars, and self-help tools. Full details can be found at:
https://kingstonuniversity.sharepoint.com/sites/mykingston/mysupport/studentwellbeing

10.10 Sport and Fitness

Information about the University's sporting clubs, facilities and Fitness Centre can be found at: www.kingston.ac.uk/sport/

10.11 Faith Groups

Our students come from many different backgrounds and cultures. Faith-based student societies include the Christian Union, the Hindu Society, the Muslim Society and the Sikh Society. The Chaplaincy works in partnership with local faith communities to offer spiritual care to all students and staff. http://www.kingston.ac.uk/faith/

10.12 Learning Disability and Dyslexia Support

The University provides extra support for dyslexic students and students with disabilities. Contact the Disability and Mental Health Support Advisors for advice when you first enrol or at any point during your registration if you think you would benefit from support. Should you have a learning disability of any kind, extra support can be provided for you at the time of examination – provided you have pre-arranged. Contact your supervisor, or GRS for information and in the first instance, contact the Student Life Centre to find what support is available for you at Kingston. Further information can be found at: kingston.ac.uk/disability/ Note that if you complete a needs assessment your report will be passed to your supervisor and examiners.

10.13 KU Talent: Careers and Employability Service

The service offers help in furthering your career, as well as support if you're looking for placement opportunities or part-time work while studying. They also run events and training sessions to help you develop skills such as networking, body language, interviews and writing your CV. Further information can be found at:
http://www.kingston.ac.uk/careers/

10.14 Accommodation

Accommodation Services provide information on all matters relating to housing and accommodation. International (non-EU) postgraduate students and some students with disabilities can apply for a place in the University's halls of residence. Information can be found at: www.kingston.ac.uk/postgraduate/accommodation

10.15 Replacement ID Cards, Letters for Banks, Council Tax Exemption etc.

In the Libraries, where you see the 'i' symbol, staff will be able to assist you with a broad range of non-academic topics including replacement ID cards, council tax exemption certificates and confirmation of enrolment etc. They can also refer you to specialist support departments who can provide advice on a wide range of matters such as accommodation and finances. Replacement ID cards are available from Penrhyn Road Library and the Nightingale Centre at Kingston Hill. Any students who have lost, damaged or need details updating on their card should follow the instructions at
https://kingstonuniversity.sharepoint.com/sites/mykingston/myuni/Pages/id.aspx

10.16 Tuition Fees and Funding

The Student Life Centre, based on the ground floor of the John Galsworthy Building at Penrhyn Road, can help with enquiries about tuition fee payment, student loans and grants, managing money and applications for extra financial help.
https://kingstonuniversity.sharepoint.com/sites/mykingston/mysupport/money/Pages/default.aspx
Phone: 020 8417 7312

10.17 International Students

A comprehensive service for international students, including advice on immigration matters, working in the UK, healthcare and information on events for international students, is available through the Student Life Centre. Details can be found at:
https://kingstonuniversity.sharepoint.com/sites/mykingston/mysupport/international/Pages/default.aspx

10.18 Intersite Bus Service

The KU bus service runs between the Kingston University campuses and operates Monday to Friday (except bank holidays) during term time. Use the Kingston App for the bus tracker or a timetable and map can be downloaded from:
http://www.kingston.ac.uk/aboutkingstonuniversity/location/intersitebusservice/