Professional Doctorate Regulations

September 2015

For further information on any of the regulations contained in this handbook, please contact staff in the Division of Governance and Quality Enhancement:
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PROFESSIONAL DOCTORATE REGULATIONS

SEPTEMBER 2015

(Please note that regulations are subject to change. Always refer to the most recent version of the regulations.)

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1   Introduction

1.1   Doctoral degrees are higher degrees involving a programme of research, teaching and supervision, and/or the development and measurement of professional competencies. These are called unspecified degrees, taking as they do, the title of the doctorate from the specialist discipline studied. Doctorates by taught courses also include some combination of compulsory and elective units which focus on specialist aspects of the discipline named in the title of the doctorate.

A doctorate may be taken by a student for reasons of wishing to complete a professional qualification, or a student may just wish to gain an academic qualification in an area that interests them and the doctoral award title will reflect this area of specialism.

Academically, the professional doctorate requires the same challenge, rigour and volume of work as a PhD. The differences lie in the material presented for the award, in that it may not be assessed solely by dissertation but may include a portfolio of professional work, of which an academic thesis is an integral part.

Structurally, the professional doctorate is a modular credit accumulation programme. All doctorates are credit rated at a minimum of 540 credits, of which up to 120 may be at SCQF Level 11, with the remainder at SCQF Level 12. There are a variety of entry routes, with students entering with an undergraduate degree taking longer to gain their doctorate than students entering with a Postgraduate Diploma or Masters degree. Students without a relevant Masters or Postgraduate Diploma will enter at the Masters stage and will not proceed to the doctoral stage until they have satisfied the progression criteria of the Programme. (See regulation 6.)

This framework is a reference for all staff at QMU who wish to develop a taught doctoral programme, or who are involved with the operation of such an award. It will also act as a point of reference for students registered on taught doctoral programmes at the University.

Aims of the Framework

The aims of this document are to:

a)   regulate the provision of all taught D-level programmes;
b)   ensure that all taught D-level programmes are governed by a common quality framework;
c)   ensure an equity in standards across all programmes;
d)   provide a reference for all elements relating to programme management;
e)   facilitate the growth and development of a range of taught doctoral programmes;
f)   widen access by extending study opportunities to mature professionals who can demonstrate they will benefit from doctoral level study.

2   Level of Awards

2.1   Within the SCQF, there are two parameters which determine qualifications: level of learning outcomes and volume of outcomes, calculated as number of credits. The QMU awards which fall within the SCQF Level 12 category are PhD or professional doctorate.

Credit definitions for each of these qualifications are given in the QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education, 2015 (QAA, 2015).

2.2   Standards of awards will be determined by the demand made on learners and their response to that demand. Standards will be benchmarked against the appropriate external reference points such as expectations of professional bodies and standards of similar awards in other universities, as determined by the external examining system.

3   Aims and Learning Outcomes

3.1   The following generic aims and learning outcomes should apply to all programmes which are encompassed by this section of the Taught Postgraduate Framework.

3.2   Aims

The shared aims of all programmes are to enable students to develop:

- high level research skills and techniques, including the ability to critically review literature, manage a database, locate resources and other sources of information, and use information technology;

- effective project management skills, including goal setting, prioritisation, designing and executing data acquisition and collation, and effective time management;

- high level competencies as an ethical professional, with regard to ethics, copyright, data protection, malpractice and intellectual property rights;

- as skilled communicators, able to construct, sustain and articulate an argument to a diverse audience;

- personal effectiveness in acquiring new knowledge, creating an innovative approach to the study of a specific area, demonstrating initiative, flexibility, self-reliance and independence;

- as independent, lifelong learners in a chosen field.

3.3   Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of a programme, graduates will be able to:

- design and execute a major project (for example research, intervention, development) demonstrating creative and original work, that is relevant and contributes to professional practice;

- demonstrate a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of applicable techniques for research and advanced academic enquiry in their chosen area, and select appropriate methodologies for their study;

- demonstrate, through an original piece of work, a critical, leading-edge knowledge and understanding at the forefront of the chosen specialism;

- communicate at many different levels, for example through publication and transfer of knowledge and understanding in critical dialogue with peers;

- demonstrate reflective, self-critical, flexible and ethical working practices, challenging current professional policies and practice;

- initiate and be fully responsible for their own and/or others' work.

4 Mode of Study

4.1 The QMU taught doctoral programmes are designed to facilitate student choice and to allow students to pursue postgraduate study while still in employment or an equivalent professional engagement. It is therefore intended that the elements of the programmes will be available in ways that facilitate full or part-time study.

Thus the elements may be delivered:

- by work based learning,
- in concentrated blocks of study,
- in normal working hours during the week-days,
- by flexible learning, or
- through a combination of these formats.

5 Entrance Requirements and Admission

This section should be read in conjunction with the QMU Governance and Regulations – Admission and Registration

The University seeks to provide access to as wide a range of candidates as possible, subject to the essential principle that there is a reasonable expectation of candidates completing their programmes of study successfully within the normal expected duration of the course.

Entry Requirements

5.1 Candidates must demonstrate that they are capable of undertaking a sustained piece of research and producing a thesis. They should normally hold a good Honours degree, a 2.1 or higher, from a UK Higher Education Institution or equivalent. In some subject areas, a higher degree would be required for entry.

5.2 In addition, individual programmes may specify additional requirements, such as a minimum of three years' relevant appropriate experience or screening through the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) process, via Disclosure Scotland. The Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme delivers on the provisions outlined in the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) (Scotland) Act 2007.

5.3 **Entry Level**

Students' entry level will be determined by their previous qualifications:

Previous qualification level	Entry point	No. of credits to be completed
Honours degree or equivalent	SCQF Level 11 modules	120 at Level 11; 420 at Level 12
Honours degree plus some relevant PG credit	individualised programme, probably to contain some SCQF Level 11 modules	Up to 120 at Level 11; 420 at Level 12
Relevant PgDip or Masters	SCQF Level 12 modules	420 at Level 12

For the purposes of this regulation, a relevant postgraduate discipline is defined as one in the same cognate area as the discipline of the professional doctorate. Individual cases will be decided on their merits by the Programme Leader.

5.4 **English Language requirements[1]**

Applicants whose first language is not English must provide evidence of proficiency in English language. Acceptable evidence is typically an overall IELTS score of 6.5, with no individual component scores lower than 6 in the academic test, or equivalent.

5.5 The English language requirements for a particular programme may be set at a higher level than those specified above. This information will be available from the relevant Programme Leader.

5.6 Where an applicant has studied a degree in the medium of English, in a country whose official language is not English, official evidence may be acceptable as proof of English proficiency. Individual cases will be decided on their merits by the Programme Leader.

Admissions Processes

5.7 **Making an application**

Application forms are available from and should be returned to the Admissions Department.

5.8 In addition to verifying academic and professional qualifications, it should be established through admission processes, including an interview, that the student:

a) is capable of independent learning;
b) can demonstrate evidence of recent academic study, intellectual skills and/or relevant post qualification study (within five years);
c) if part-time, has demonstrated a sufficient level of motivation to sustain study over a period of years;

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[1] English language requirements may be subject to change. Current requirements are published at: http://www.qmu.ac.uk/quality/qm/AZindex.htm (Admissions and Registration Regulations)

d)   understands the nature of a taught doctoral programme, and can clearly demonstrate how the programme will contribute to their continuing professional development.

These regulations must be read in conjunction with the University's general admissions regulations. Where a topic is not addressed in this document the relevant section of the University regulations should be referred to. Individual programmes may also have specific regulations. For example, the professional doctorate requires candidates to have support from a work context and/or have ideas how to apply the learning in an appropriate work context.

5.9   Decision making on applications

Admissions forwards completed application forms to the relevant Programme Leader. Each suitable applicant is then wherever possible invited for interview. It is the responsibility of the Programme Leader to ensure that the applicant has appropriate entry requirements and is suited to pursuing a taught doctoral programme and that an appropriate Supervisor is available.

Where an applicant wishes to pursue an independent taught doctoral programme they apply directly to the Head of the relevant Division. Decisions regarding these applicants should be ratified by the Research Strategy Committee, acting on advice from the Graduate School Academic Board.

The Registry is the only body authorised to admit a student to the University. Once decisions have been made or ratified, by either the Programme Leader or the relevant committee, all paperwork should be forwarded to Admissions with the decision and start date clearly indicated.

5.10   Start dates

Start dates will be decided separately for each individual programme.

5.11   Staff

Members of staff of the University wishing to register for a professional doctorate must first discuss it with their line manager through Performance Enhancement Review. If it is agreed that appropriate study time can be set aside within the staff member's workload, he or she may submit a formal application through the usual channels. It is expected that members of staff who are accepted for a doctoral programme will have some study time protected, although much of the work will need to be done outwith normal working hours.

5.12   Equal Opportunities

The University is fully committed to the provision of equality of opportunity within the admissions criteria specified and aims to promote entry to and provide education for all students, whatever their background.

5.13   **Admission of Disabled Applicants**

Applications from all students will be assessed on the basis of academic suitability for the programme in question. Discussions about the support requirements of students will be separate from that consideration. Applicants are encouraged to indicate any disabilities on the application form. Where a disabled candidate can meet the academic entry requirements, the Academic Disabled Students Co-ordinator of the relevant Division should be consulted. The standard process for determining special support needs should be followed before making an offer, in accordance with the QMU general Admissions Regulations.

5.14   **Recognition of Prior Learning**

The Programme Leader should consider evidence relating to the applicant's previous qualifications and experience and make a decision regarding Recognition of Prior Learning through the standard QMU procedures. The offer letter should state how much credit has been awarded and the stage of the programme at which the applicant may enter.

5.15   **Fees**

Fees will be set each year by the relevant authorities within the University. Copies of the relevant fees applicable to doctoral programmes will be available from the Admissions Office on request, and will be sent out with each offer made.

6   Programme Structure

6.1   The doctoral programme is offered through either full or part-time routes, within timescales defined by individual programmes. The general structure will be as in the table below. It is not necessarily required that a student completes one stage before starting another, but individual programmes must clearly define the progression routes and any pre-requisites.

	Entry with Honours degree or equivalent	*Entry with PgDip or equivalent*
Masters modules	Study modules at SCQF11 to the value of 120 credits	Recognition of Prior Learning
Doctorate modules	Study modules at SCQF12	Study taught modules at SCQF12
Doctoral thesis	Complete thesis	Complete project and thesis

6.2   Each programme document must define:

- The criteria for progression to SCQF 12 modules. Normally a student will be expected to have successfully attained a certain minimum amount of credit at SCQF 11 before commencing Level 12 work (dependent on the structure of the individual programme).
- Mechanisms for monitoring student progress.
- The criteria for starting work on the project / thesis. Normally it would be expected that students would have passed all relevant taught research modules before commencing the project.

- Procedures for approving the project proposal and confirming the supervisory team. Normally, the appropriate School Academic Board will be responsible for proposal approval and appointment of supervisors.

6.3 The minimum and maximum registration periods for professional doctoral programmes are equivalent to those for a PhD:

	Minimum *if awarded credit*	Minimum *if abbreviated*	Prescribed Period	Maximum
PhD				
FT	24 months	30 months	**36 months**	48 months
PT	48 months	60 months	**72 months**	96 months

Prof Doc	Minimum *if Masters*[1]	Minimum *if abbreviated*[2]	Prescribed Period	Maximum[3]
FT	24 months (2 years)	30 months (2.5 years)	**36 months** **(3 years)**	48 months (4 years)
PT	48 months (4 years)	60 months (5 years)	**72 months** **(6 years)**	96 months (8 years)

1. Up to 270 credits may be awarded by Recognition of Prior Learning. This would reduce the registration period by one year FTE.
2. Students may apply for abbreviation of study in the event that the research is proceeding ahead of schedule. A student may apply for both credit and abbreviation of study.
3. Exceptionally, students may extend their final registration date by applying for suspensions and/or extensions under the provisions set out in the PhD Regulations. Applications for suspension would be dealt with by the Graduate School Academic Board. Applications for extension would have to come to the University Secretary. Such applications must be accompanied by documented evidence supporting the application

6.4 Students may apply to the Graduate School Academic Board for a suspension of studies. Normally, no more than one year of suspension will be authorised at any one time. In most circumstances, a maximum of two years of suspension will be allowed. Students who wish to suspend study for more than two years must discuss their situation with the Programme Leader. No additional time will be allowed without the agreement of a realistic action plan to allow the student to complete the degree successfully once he or she returns.

The Director of Studies will contact the student before the end of the period of suspension to confirm the student's return date. GQE staff will be responsible for reminding the Director of Studies of this obligation. If the student does not return within one month of the agreed return date, without extenuating circumstances accepted by the Graduate School Academic Board, procedures for de-registration due to lack of contact will be followed as in 10.2.5 below.

6.5 Applications for a change of mode of study from full-time to part-time status or vice versa will only be granted on the basis of documented good cause and normally within the prescribed period of study. This application must be made by the student to the Graduate School Academic Board on the appropriate form, counter-signed by the Director of Studies. It is not normally possible to change mode of study retrospectively.

Following a change of mode of study from full-time to part-time status or vice versa, the minimum and maximum periods of study will be re-calculated. The Secretary to the Graduate School Academic Board will calculate the new periods of study and inform the student and Director of Studies.

6.6   The taught doctoral programmes, in line with SCQF level 12 requirements and standards, will be awarded on the completion of 540 credits of which a minimum of 420 must be at level 12, with the remainder at level 11.

6.7   A student who completes 180 credits may be eligible for the award of Masters. Individual programmes should define the criteria for such a subsidiary exit award and its title through the programme approval process. In accordance with QMU guidelines on Recognition of Prior Learning, at least 90 of the credits should have been completed as part of the student's current programme.

6.8   Within this overarching framework, programme planning teams will have flexibility to decide on the size of individual components, within programmes and individual learning contracts. Programmes will include a thesis or equivalent major project, which will normally account for 180 credits at SCQF12.

6.9   Students entering a doctoral programme with a relevant Masters will normally be credited with 120 credits at level 11.

6.10   Students wishing to enter professional doctorates with advanced standing may request credit for previous study, where applicable to the specific programme outcomes. Students transferring from a relevant PgDip or Masters degree, which allows exemption for 120 credits at SCQF level 11, may request further credit at level 12 where they can demonstrate learning outcomes at the appropriate level have been met. QMU graduates will be advised that the existing credit is subsidiary to the new qualification and that this would be noted on the transcript where possible. Students must complete the thesis at Queen Margaret University to be eligible for award. No more than 50% of the total 540 credits for the programme can be awarded by RPL. Only in exceptional circumstances will considerable credit be awarded for experiential learning.

6.11   Normally, all taught modules must be passed before the student can progress to the thesis stage. The Secretary to the Board of Examiners will inform the Division of Governance and Quality Enhancement once taught modules are passed.

6.12   Examples of the differing structures possible within this framework can be found in Appendix 1.

7   Programme Operation and Management

7.1   Introduction

The Taught Postgraduate Framework (D-level) provides a structure for a range of awards, and it allows different types of awards to be developed. This Framework has been established in order to provide consistency between awards within an institution wide management structure.

7.2   **The Research Strategy Committee and Graduate School Academic Board**

7.2.1   The Research Strategy Committee is the standing committee of Senate with overall responsibility for the academic quality of doctoral degrees at Queen Margaret University. The Research Strategy Committee makes recommendations to Senate on the regulatory framework for doctoral degree programmes and related matters. It also promotes best practice in admission, supervision and examination of doctoral students.

7.2.2   The Research Strategy Committee delegates specific matters concerning individual students to the Graduate School Academic Board. The Graduate School Academic Board has delegated authority as set out below:

- approval of supervisory teams for new students and subsequent changes to the composition of teams
- approval of requests to suspend studies
- approval of requests to change mode of study from full- to part-time and vice versa
- verification of examination arrangements
- permission to exceed thesis word limit
- restriction on publication of theses
- permission to submit early (abbreviation of the period of study)
- extension to time limit for amendments
- consideration of exceptional viva arrangements, for example held off campus

7.2.3   All of the above decisions are taken by the Graduate School Academic Board on behalf of the Research Strategy Committee, and the Research Strategy Committee has final authority to confirm Graduate School Academic Board decisions and make recommendations to Senate. The Graduate School Academic Board also makes recommendation on the following, which are recommended to and considered separately by the Research Strategy Committee:

- decisions regarding individual taught doctorate routes
- viva outcome and confirmation of award
- de-registration

7.2.4   The Graduate School Academic Board also receives Programme Committee minutes (see 7.5 below).

7.3.   **Schools**

Each programme is based in a School. The School provides administrative support, a focus for student interaction, the source of information, and contact between the Programme Leader and students. In most cases, the home School will be easily identified, as the School providing the major input to the programme. The Dean of School is responsible for determining the home Division and for approving any change thereof. The Dean of School has overall responsibility for the provision of resources to support programmes.

7.4. **Programme Leader**

7.4.1   A Programme Leader will be drawn from the home School and be nominated by the Dean of School. In the unavoidable absence of a Programme Leader, an acting Programme Leader will be appointed by the Dean of School. A Programme Leader is accountable in day-to-day operational terms to the Dean of School. It is appropriate to appoint Joint Programme Leaders in some circumstances. (The alternative term 'Programme Director' may be used.)

7.4.2   The appointment of the subsidiary office-bearers such as admissions tutors, Personal Academic Tutors etc. is at the discretion of the Dean of School. In the case of very large or complex courses it may be appropriate to appoint an assistant Programme Leader.

7.4.3   In particular, a Programme Leader's responsibilities are:

(a)   as Convener of the Programme Committee to ensure the effective organisation and conduct of the programme within agreed policies and regulations;

(b)   to ensure in consultation with the appropriate Dean of School and Head(s) of Division(s) that the delivery and assessment of the programme is consistent with the content of the course as validated;

(c)   to monitor student progress and take action as required (in accordance with the programme specific regulations);

(d)   to counsel students on the nature and choice of projects;

(e)   to agree the number of offers that should be made to meet the admission targets in consultation with admission tutors and Heads of Division;

(f)   to monitor the operation of the programme on an ongoing basis, and to co-ordinate its annual evaluation;

(g)   to lead the academic development of the programme;

(h)   to negotiate with the Head(s) of Division(s) the allocation of appropriate staff for supervision/teaching and other duties required by the programme;

(i)   to co-ordinate any necessary interaction with professional and external validating bodies through the appropriate internal mechanisms;

(j)   to select students for admission;

(k)   to keep in close touch with the academic welfare and progress of students in the programme, and to be closely aware of students' views about the programme;

(l)   in consultation with the other relevant staff to agree an assessment schedule;

(m)   to co-ordinate and present papers to internal committees as required;

(n)   to take executive action as agreed by the Programme Committee.

7.4.4   The Programme Leader will normally be responsible for the co-ordination of all assessments for the programme and liaison with External Examiners. The Programme Leader is also responsible for identification of suitable examiners for all modules (excluding the thesis) and ensuring nomination forms are passed to the relevant committees for approval.

7.5   **Programme Committee**

7.5.1   The Programme Committee will have overall academic and operational responsibility for the programme and its development within defined policies, procedures and regulations. The Committee will be responsible for maintaining and enhancing the academic standards of the programme through:

(a)   monitoring and evaluation of the aims, objectives and structure of the programme;
(b)   establishment and development of mechanisms to ensure student feedback;
(c)   review of, assessment instruments;
(d)   making recommendations in respect of academic regulations and admissions policy statements
(e)   development of teaching and learning methods.

7.5.2   The Programme Committee will be responsible for:
(a)   Agreeing the assessment schedule;
(b)   Approving changes to modules;
(c)   Nominating external examiners
(d)   Monitoring quality and approving the annual programme report;
(e)   Receiving reports of module evaluation;
(f)   Responding to operational issues and making recommendations regarding the provision of appropriate resources and facilities.

7.5.3   The Graduate School Academic Board will be responsible for matters set out in paragraph 7.2.2 above.

7.5.4   Programme Committee members embership consists of the Programme Leader (who will normally act as Convener), Directors of Studies and module co-ordinators involved in the programme. Two student members should be elected. The Head(s) of Division and Dean(s) of School will be members ex officio.

7.5.5   The Committee will report issues to the Graduate School Academic Board, as appropriate.

7.6   **Student-Staff Consultative Committee**

Programmes should convene a Student-Staff Consultative Committee to provide a forum for constructive discussion between students and staff about issues affecting the programme. This Committee should be structured in accordance with the QMU guidelines on programme management. However, it is recognised that the diverse nature of the

student group on professional doctorate programmes, and emphasis on work-based learning, may make it difficult to convene formal meetings in work time. Programme Teams should consider alternative mechanisms for ensuring the student voice is heard.

8 Supervision

8.1 At the point of admission, a member of staff should be identified to act as the student's Director of Studies. The Director of Studies must be a current member of the academic staff of the University. During the earlier stages of the doctorate, the Director of Studies will act as the student's Personal Academic Tutor, taking on project supervision duties as well once the student reaches that point.

8.2 When the student develops his or her project proposal, a full supervisory team will be identified, consisting of a Director of Studies (the principal supervisor), at least one Second Supervisor, and if appropriate one or more work-based advisors. If the thesis is in an area which the Director of Studies is not able to supervise, a change of supervision team may be arranged.

8.3 The frequency of supervisory meetings between the Director of Studies and the full-time student should be not less than bi-monthly throughout the prescribed period of study. Meetings with part-time students will be less frequent. In the early months, the frequency of meetings should be greater. Where students are based at distance equivalent discussions must be held by telephone or email. Students must keep records of all their meeting and formal discussions with the supervisory team.

8.4 Once work has commenced on the project, meetings of the full supervisory team with the student should be arranged by the Director of Studies at least every six months for full-time students, and yearly for part-time students, for review purposes.

8.5 The Director of Studies must hold a professional doctorate or PhD, or be able to demonstrate equivalent experience. Normally, the Director of Studies will be a specialist in the research topic, with second supervisor(s) appointed for their knowledge of related topics or methodologies. One or more advisors may be appointed to provide specialist input. Advisors may be external to the University, especially where they provide a link with a collaborative partner institution.

8.6 The Director of Studies must normally have been a member of a previous supervisory team for at least one successful research degree or professional doctorate candidate. Where a staff member without completions wishes to supervise a project in which he or she has specialist knowledge, he or she should normally be appointed as Second Supervisor, with a more experienced member of staff acting as Director of Studies.

8.7 The Director of Studies is formally responsible to the Programme Leader for a student's progress with their programme of study.

8.8 The role of a Second Supervisor is to provide background consultative advice, and to fulfil the responsibility of the Director of Studies in the event of any short-term absence (i.e. up to three months).

8.9 No Second Supervisor should act as a temporary Director of Studies for more than three months without a new Director of Studies being appointed.

8.10   When a Second Supervisor has been absent for longer than three months, an application for the appointment of a replacement must be made to the Graduate School Academic Board.

8.11   Alternative supervisory arrangements must be formalised in advance of any planned long-term leave (such as maternity or research leave) taken by a Director of Studies or Second Supervisor.

8.12   A supervisor who has been replaced due to his or her absence will not be automatically reinstated on his or her return. The case for return to the supervisory team has to be made to the Graduate School Academic Board.

8.13   A member of staff must not normally act as Director of Studies for more than six doctoral candidates at any one time (taught or research).

8.14   In the case of problems arising with supervisory relationships which cannot be resolved jointly by the student and the supervisory team, either the student or the supervisor involved may ask the Programme Committee to recommend a change of supervisor. The Dean of School should be approached if problems seem to be beyond the capacity of the Committee to resolve.

9   Assessment Regulations

9.1   Assessment within a professional doctorate may comprise a number of elements. Each taught module will be assessed separately. Some programmes may include a learning contract or portfolio. This may be formative for the purposes of the student's own professional development. If, however, the portfolio is to be assessed summatively, the relationship of the portfolio to other elements of assessment must be clearly specified. All forms of assessment will be clearly outlined in the programme handbook.

9.2   Assessment of taught modules

9.2.1   Students must register on modules in each academic year. The student's programme should be agreed with his or her Director of Studies and Programme Leader.

9.2.2   A student who registers on a module will be expected to submit work for assessment in accordance with the assessment schedule. Requests for extenuating circumstances will be dealt with in accordance with the QMU extenuating circumstances policy. An assignment which is not submitted within 7 days of the agreed submission date without prior approval will be failed.

9.2.3   At the Masters stage, assessment will be governed by the regulations relating to taught postgraduate programmes.

9.2.4   At doctoral level, work will be marked as pass or fail, with no compensation possible between elements. All modules weighted at 60 credits or more at SCQF 12 will be double marked.

9.2.5   A student who fails a module at SCQF12 will be allowed one retrieval attempt only. Students will not normally be permitted to fail more than one module without being required to withdraw from the programme.

9.2.6   Students submitting their first piece of work for assessment at SCQF Level 12 may submit a complete draft of the assignment to the module co-ordinator for formative feedback, on one occasion only. Students must negotiate the timing of their submission with the module co-ordinator in advance to ensure enough time is allowed for due consideration of the work.

9.2.7   Module results will be confirmed by a Board of Examiners. The Board will be responsible for:

- confirming results;
- monitoring student progress;
- ensuring compliance with QMU regulations;
- assuring the quality of the assessment process.

The Board of Examiners will report to Senate via the Graduate School Academic Board, which makes recommendations on award to the Research Strategy Committee (see also 9.10.2 below).

9.2.8   An External Examiner will be appointed to each programme with responsibility for oversight of the programme as a whole and moderation of work for the modules within the programme.

9.2.9   Should a student wish to appeal the decision of a Board of Examiners in relation to a taught module at either SCQF level 11 or 12, the University's general Academic Appeals Procedure shall apply.

9.3   **Assessment of the thesis**

9.3.1   For the purposes of these regulations, 'thesis' refers to the major piece of written work submitted by the student. This may take the form of a report on a major research or work-based project, a thesis, or some other piece of significant independent work defined by the programme regulations.

9.3.2   No part of a thesis may have been included in a submission for any other degree or qualification without the permission of the Graduate School Academic Board, acting on behalf of the Research Strategy Committee.

9.3.3   The examination of a thesis normally has two principal stages: the preliminary assessment of the thesis, followed by its defence at an oral examination. The key function of the examination is to establish that both the candidate and the thesis reach the standard required for the degree, with respect to the criteria listed in the individual programme regulations. Another function of the oral examination is to demonstrate the candidate's authorship of the thesis and understanding of the field of study.

9.3.4   All doctoral students must pay an examination fee, which is charged at the time of the appointment of Examiners, before submission of the thesis for examination. A second fee

is charged for any formal re-examination. Copies of the relevant fees applicable to doctorate students will be available from the Admissions Office on request.

9.4 **Preparation for submission of the thesis**

9.4.1 The decision to submit the thesis for examination is the candidate's alone, but only exceptionally should a thesis be submitted without the agreement of the supervisor. However, the candidate must submit within the maximum period of registration. A student who does not submit in time will automatically fail. Students may apply to the University Secretary for an extension to their registration. Such extensions will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.

9.4.2 It is the candidate's responsibility to ensure that the thesis conforms to the regulations on format and binding in Appendix 2, Section 3.

9.5 **Appointment of examiners and arrangements**

9.5.1 The student's Director of Studies, in consultation with the Programme Leader and the Dean of School, is responsible for nominating examiners. Nominations are sent to the Graduate School Academic Board for consideration (on behalf of the Research Strategy Committee) and should be submitted for approval three months before the expected date of submission to allow time for scrutiny and approval.

9.5.2 In nominating examiners the Director of Studies should consult the candidate, and take into consideration any views he or she may express.

9.5.3 Normally the Dean of School will approach examiners to confirm their willingness to act in this capacity, although this task may be delegated to the Head of Division. The examiners should confirm their willingness before the Examination Arrangements form is submitted to the Graduate School Academic Board.
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9.5.4 The Director of Studies must avoid all known conflicts of interest in nominating examiners, including cases where an external examiner has acted frequently for the School in the past. The programme external examiner, nevertheless, *may* be nominated. No member of the candidate's current or previous supervisory team (including any formal advisors), research collaborators or anyone with a close association with the candidate's research, may act as an examiner. The Graduate School Academic Board, acting on behalf of the Research Strategy Committee, requires nominated examiners to declare any other potential conflict(s) of interest.

9.5.5 The candidate must have no contact with the external examiner(s) between the nomination of examiners and the oral examination.

9.5.6 There must be a minimum of two examiners, including one external and one internal, with normally not more than three examiners.

9.5.7 Internal examiners will normally be members of staff of the University, but may on occasion be previous members of staff who have left not more than three years before, or members of Collaborating Establishments.

9.5.8   No previous member of staff of the University may act as an external examiner within five years of leaving.

9.5.9   Examiners must hold a doctoral qualification or equivalent qualification or experience. External examiners must be independent, and must normally be experienced in examining at the relevant level. They must also be experienced in the specialist topic. Internal examiners need not be specialists in the topic but must have experience of the general field of research. No candidate for a doctoral degree shall normally be appointed as an examiner.

9.5.10 When the internal examiner has no previous experience of examining at the relevant level, the Convener of the Graduate School Academic Board – or a nominated member of the Board - shall act as neutral non-voting chair of the oral examination.

9.5.11 Candidates submitting theses on multidisciplinary topics may have two external examiners, drawn from the contributing disciplines.

9.5.12 Candidates who are members of staff of the University (other than research assistants) must have two external examiners, and the internal examiner must not be the candidate's Head of Division or Dean of School.

9.5.13 Where it is not possible to identify a suitable internal examiner, two external examiners may be appointed. The Convener of the Graduate School Academic Board, or a delegated member of the Board, will act as neutral non-voting chair of the oral examination.

9.6   **Submission of the thesis for examination**

9.6.1   On completion, one copy of the thesis (see Appendix 2, Section 3.6.2) and any additional material (see Appendix 2, Section 3.7) must be provided for each examiner, with an extra electronic copy for GQE, before the expiry of the registration period. These should be submitted, along with the Candidate's Declaration form, to the Secretary to the Graduate School Academic Board for distribution to the examiners. No copies should normally be submitted before the Graduate School Academic Board (acting on behalf of the Research Strategy Committee) has approved the examination arrangements.

9.6.2   The Candidate's Declaration form signed by the candidate must accompany the submission of the examination copies of the thesis. This form certifies that the work is the candidate's own and that no part has been previously included in a degree submission. Full bibliographic details should also be given of any publication by the candidate, including joint publications, which has been derived from or included in the thesis. The form also contains a checklist to be completed, indicating word length and compliance with the requirements for format and binding listed in Appendix 2, Section 3 below. If the thesis exceeds the upper word limit by more than 10% it will not be accepted for examination and will be returned to the candidate..

9.6.3   All members of the supervisory team should sign the Declaration Form to confirm that the work is the candidate's own. On the form the supervisors should indicate whether they:

        (a)   Believe the thesis is worthy for consideration for the award of doctorate;

(b)   Do not believe the thesis is worthy of consideration, or hold reservations about its quality.

9.6.4   In the event of (b) the student will be given the option to delay submission and make further revisions (assuming there remains sufficient time in the student's period of maximum registration). Should the student prefer to submit the thesis without revision, he or she must sign the declaration form to confirm this.

9.6.5   Acceptance of the thesis for submission does not guarantee a successful outcome in examination.

9.7   **Examination of the thesis**

9.7.1   After reading the thesis, examiners are required to complete a Preliminary Assessment form, in which they are asked to comment on the professional, intellectual, scholarly and literary quality of the thesis, and to identify areas on which they would wish to question the candidate in the oral examination.

9.7.2   The preliminary reports must be independent and confidential.

9.7.3   The reports must be sent to the Graduate School Officer at least two days in advance of the date agreed for the oral examination. A copy of each examiner's report is made available to the other examiner(s), to facilitate preliminary discussion, before the oral examination, but only after all reports have been received. In the event that the examiners feel the thesis is too poor academically to be worthy of examination, the oral examination will still be held, to allow the student the chance to discuss the thesis with the examiners.

9.7.4   An oral examination is obligatory for all candidates, save in exceptional cases where the Graduate School Academic Board (on behalf of the Research Strategy Committee) has recommended an alternative form of examination, for a valid cause such as disability, and the Graduate School Academic Board has accepted this recommendation. Inadequate knowledge of the language in which the thesis is presented shall not constitute a valid cause.

9.7.5   The Graduate School Officer is responsible for arranging the date of the oral examination, which must normally be held between six and twelve weeks from receipt of the thesis by the examiners. (However, candidates may request postponement of the oral examination for good reason likely to have an adverse effect on their performance. These reasons may include recent bereavement, personal or family illness, or serious domestic problems.) The oral examination should be held at Queen Margaret University. Exceptionally, the Graduate School Academic Board, acting on behalf of the Research Strategy Committee, may give permission for the oral to be held elsewhere.

9.7.6   The Director of Studies or another member of the supervisory team may attend the oral examination, with the prior agreement of the candidate and of the examiners. The Director of Studies may only speak when addressed by the examiners on matters of clarification, and must not intervene in the evaluative process. A further function of the attendance of the Director of Studies is to be present to hear any comments by the examiners on necessary amendments.

9.7.7 During the oral examination, the examiners may explore the candidate's understanding of the general field of study and research methodology as well as of the specific topic of the thesis.

9.8 Final report

9.8.1 The examiners are required to complete and sign a joint final report at the end of the oral examination, and to indicate which of the options below they recommend to the Graduate School Academic Board:

   (a) the candidate be awarded a pass
   (b) the candidate be awarded a pass subject to minor amendments, to be completed within two months of the examiners' report being sent to the candidate
   (c) the candidate be awarded a pass subject to major amendments, to be completed within six months of the examiners' report being sent to the candidate
   (d) the candidate be permitted to resubmit a substantially amended version of the thesis for re-examination, within twelve months of the examiners' report being sent to the candidate. A second oral examination is normally obligatory.
   (e) The candidate be neither awarded the degree, nor permitted to resubmit, nor awarded an alternative degree.

9.8.2 The comments in the final report by the examiners should provide a sufficient basis to enable the Graduate School Academic Board to be satisfied that the recommendation chosen from Regulation 9.8.1 is appropriate and that such recommendation may be made to the Research Strategy Committee. All parts of the form must be completed.

9.8.3 The final report by the examiners is confidential to the Candidate, the Research Degrees Panel, Research Strategy Committee and Senate, the student and supervisory team.

9.8.4 Examiners are also required to provide typed feedback for the candidate, including a formal statement of any necessary amendments, as an attachment to the final report. The full report and feedback should be supplied to the Secretary to the Research Strategy Committee within three days of the examination. It is essential that the amendments listed are complete and clear. Guidance must be appropriately specific, preferably identifying where the amendments should be inserted. The student is required to make only the amendments specified in the final report and examiners may not introduce new issues later – see regulation 9.8.5 below.

9.8.5 The final report should indicate which examiner(s) will be responsible for verifying that all and only the prescribed amendments have been satisfactorily completed. Major amendments are normally verified by the external as well as by the internal examiner.

9.8.6 Where the examiners are not able to be unanimous in their final recommendations, separate final reports should be completed and signed. In this circumstance the Graduate School Academic Board may make one of the following recommendations to the Research Strategy Committee:

   a. accept a majority recommendation (provided that the majority includes at least one external examiner)
   b. accept the recommendation of the external examiner

c.   require the appointment of new examiners to conduct an independent examination, including an oral examination.

9.8.7   The Graduate School Academic Board may very exceptionally recommend (on behalf of the Research Strategy Committee) an extension to the time period for amendments. Applications must be made well in advance of the deadline, and must be supported by the Director of Studies and the Programme Committee.

9.9   **Submission of amended or revised thesis**

9.9.1   A thesis may normally be re-submitted for formal examination only once, and no candidate may be examined more than twice for a given degree.

9.9.2   Where a candidate has been required to submit an amended thesis under 9.8.1 (b) or (c) above, the amendments should be checked by the examiner(s) within four weeks of receipt. The examiner(s) may only check against the amendments specified following the oral examination and may not introduce new points of issue. If the amendments have been satisfactorily completed, the candidate will be awarded the degree.

9.9.3   If the examiner(s) are not satisfied the amendments have been satisfactorily completed the candidate should be so informed and given the opportunity to make the required amendments within a period of two weeks. If the thesis resubmitted for a second time does not incorporate the required amendments both examiners must view the amended thesis and discuss it. Where the amendments have been partially completed, the examiners should consider whether the thesis, as it stands, is worthy of a doctorate. Should the examiners be unable to reach agreement, regulation 9.8.6 applies. A candidate knowingly fails to make a required amendment at his or her own risk. The examiners may make one of the following recommendations:

    a.   the candidate be awarded a pass
    b.   the candidate be awarded a fail

9.9.4   Should the candidate be required to resubmit, the appointment of the original examiners normally remains in force for the second examination. Should any of the original examiners be unavailable, a revised examination team must be approved by the Graduate School Academic Board, acting on behalf of the Research Strategy Committee. The process of re-examination follows the pattern of a first examination, except that a restricted set of final recommendations is available, as follows:

    a.   the candidate be awarded a pass
    b.   the candidate be awarded a pass subject to minor amendments, to be completed within two months
    c.   the candidate be awarded a fail

9.10   **Award of the degree**

9.10.1   The authority to award doctoral degrees rests solely with Senate.

9.10.2   The Research Strategy Committee shall make a recommendation to Senate, acting on advice from the Graduate School Academic Board, and based on the recommendation(s) of the Board of Examiners for taught modules and the recommendation(s) and report(s) of

the examiners for the thesis, and following confirmation from the examiner(s) that any necessary corrections have been satisfactorily completed, that the degree be awarded. The Secretary to the Research Strategy Committee will write to the candidate, advising that they may proceed to arrange for the binding of the final version.

9.10.3 When Senate has agreed that the degree should be awarded, the Secretary to the Research Strategy Committee communicates the decision to the graduand and notifies the Records Office of Registry that they are entitled to graduate. Further correspondence about the process of graduation is then the responsibility of the Records Office.

9.10.4 In the event of a recommendation from the Research Strategy Committee, acting on advice from the Research Degrees Panel, that no degree should be awarded, again the final decision rests with Senate. The Secretary to the Research Strategy Committee will communicate Senate's decision to the candidate.

9.10.5 Candidates may appeal against the outcome of their examination, on a limited number of grounds. These grounds and the process of appeal are described in Section 10 below.

10 Registration and Continuing Registration on the Programme

10.1 The maximum periods of registration are as set out in regulation 6.3. A student may cease to be registered for a doctoral award if he or she:

- is granted the award of Masters;
- fails more modules than permitted under the assessment regulations;
- is making seriously inadequate progress, as determined by the supervisory team;
- has not matriculated;
- has not paid tuition fees as required;
- is not in contact with his/her supervisory team;
- the student fails to comply with conditions set by the Graduate School Academic Board, Research Strategy Committee, Dean or Supervisory Team.
- fails to submit within the prescribed period of registration.

10.2 All students are required to pursue their programmes of study with due diligence. If a student wilfully and persistently neglects his or her academic work, or in the case of seriously inadequate progress being signalled in the probationary or annual reports, the student's registration may be terminated under the following:-

10.2.1 **Granted Award of Masters:** Should a student decide to exit the programme with a Masters award, the student will no longer be eligible to continue the programme for a professional doctorate award.

10.2.2 **Fails more modules than permitted under the assessment regulations:** As set out in Regulation 9.2.3, at the Masters stage, assessment will be governed by the regulations relating to taught postgraduate programmes As set out in Regulation 9.2.5, a student who fails a module at SCQF12 will be allowed one retrieval attempt only. Students will not normally be permitted to fail more than one module without being required to withdraw from the programme. The decision to withdraw a student from the programme under these circumstances will be made by the Board of Examiners.

An appeal against a decision of the Board of Examiners shall be appealed under the University's general Academic Appeals Procedure.

10.2.3 **Seriously inadequate progress.** Annual reports on the progress of all professional doctorate students must be submitted separately by the student and Director of Studies to the Division of Governance and Quality Enhancement. This is a requirement even for students and Directors of Studies with no issues to report. GQE staff will provide a full set of reports to the Dean of School. A summary report will be presented to the Graduate School Academic Board each year. This report will detail key themes emerging. Issues raised by individual students or Directors will come to the Board only where it is within the Board's remit to take decisions. This approach maintains confidentiality and anonymity. If a Director of Studies is concerned about a student's lack of progress, this should be highlighted in the annual progress report. Following an adverse report, the Dean of School may recommend an immediate meeting with the student. Normally, however, the Dean of School will recommend action to address the points at issue. The Director of Studies and student should meet to agree an action plan and targets to allow the student to improve his or her performance.

Concerns about progress may arise mid-year, outwith the annual progress report cycle. Issues should be discussed with the student first, explaining the consequences of failure to improve. The Director of Studies should consult with the full supervisory team to agree whether a report should be made to the Dean of School.

If the concerns are serious and urgent, or if the student has failed to meet agreed targets for improvement, the Programme Leader will meet with the student to discuss whether the project can continue. Where students are based overseas alternative arrangements for this meeting will be applied.

This meeting may result in one of three outcomes:
    (i)   the student continues in registration;
    (ii)   the student continues in registration conditionally on the attainment of certain agreed targets; or
    (iii) a recommendation is made to the Research Strategy Committee via the Graduate School Academic Board that the student's registration be terminated.

De-registration may be recommended providing (a) the full supervisory team have been consulted and (b) the student has had an opportunity to respond to the concerns raised. Should deregistration be recommended, the procedure set out in regulation 10.2.4 shall be followed.

10.2.4 **Failure to matriculate.** Students must matriculate every year in accordance with Queen Margaret University regulations. When a student has not matriculated, and has not provided an explanation for not so doing, the Graduate School Officer will write formally to the student, copied to the Director of Studies, requesting an explanation. If no adequate explanation or reply is made by the student within ten working days of the date of the written request, the Director of Studies will refer the case to the Head of the Graduate School. The Head of the Graduate School will ask the Graduate School Officer to write to the student, giving him or her one month from the date of the written request to reply in writing. If no satisfactory explanation is provided, the Head of the Graduate School may

recommend to the Research Strategy Committee via the Graduate School Academic Board that the student's registration be terminated.

10.2.5 **Lack of contact.** When a student has not been in contact with the supervisory team for six weeks (full-time) or three months (part-time), or if a student does not contact their supervisory team when required to do so by that team and at the frequency required by that team, the Director of Studies will write formally to the student requesting an explanation. If no adequate explanation or reply is made by the student within ten working days of the date of the written request, the Director of Studies will refer the case to the Head of the Graduate Schooll. The Head f of the Graduate School will ask the Graduate School Officer to write to the student, giving him or her one month from the date of the written request to reply in writing. If, in the Head of the Graduate School's opinion, no reasonable explanation is provided, the Head of the Graduate School may recommend to the Research Strategy Committee via the Graduate School Academic Board that the student's registration be terminated.

10.2.6 Failure to comply with conditions set by the Research Strategy Committee, Dean or supervisory team: When a student has not complied with stipulated conditions, and has not provided an explanation for not so doing, the Director of Studies will write formally to the student requesting an explanation. If no adequate explanation or reply is made by the student within 10 working days of the date of the written request, the Director of Studies will refer the case to the Dean of School. The Dean of School will ask the Division of Governance and Quality Enhancement to write to the student, giving him or her one month from the date of the written request to reply in writing. If no satisfactory explanation is provided, the Dean of School may recommend to the Research Strategy Committee via the Research Degrees Panel that the student's registration be terminated.

10.2.7 **Failure to submit the final thesis.** The Division of Governance and Quality Enhancement will alert the student that their period of registration is about to elapse. If no thesis is submitted within the approved time period and no application for extension or suspension has been received, the student's registration will be terminated automatically.

10.2.8 **Non-payment of tuition fees** All students must pay tuition fees and other charges as required. Where a student has failed to engage with the University to find a solution to any outstanding tuition fee or debt, or has failed to honour an agreement to pay any tuition fee debt, the student's registration may be terminated.

10.3 Students have the right of appeal to the Deputy Principal against any of the decisions made under Regulation 10.2. Appeals must be addressed in writing to the University Secretary, and must be submitted within 21 days of receipt of the official decision. The general appeals process applies as set out in Section 11. Permissible grounds of appeal are:

- additional information is available that was not, and could not, reasonably have been made available to the Graduate School Academic Board at the time it made its original recommendation to the Research Strategy Committee and which had it been available could have led the Panel to making a different decision
- there was a material irregularity in the procedures of the Graduate School Academic Board.

Appeals will be heard by the Deputy Principal within 30 days of the receipt of the appeal.

If a student is dissatisfied with the outcome of the appeal, the student may refer to the Scottish Public Service Ombudsman, as set out in the Academic Appeal Regulations.

10.4   Where a student wishes voluntarily to withdraw from his or her programme of study, this must be indicated on the appropriate withdrawal form and submitted to graduateschool@qmu.ac.uk The student must inform his or her Director of Studies of the decision to withdraw. Whenever possible, the student should meet with the Head of the Graduate School before making any firm decision.

10.5   All students are required to observe the University's Regulations and Codes of Conduct and Practice. The University reserves the right to take disciplinary action against any student on the grounds of a breach of rules and regulations or abuse of Codes of Conduct and Practice. Such cases are considered under the procedures described in the section on Discipline on the Quality website. Outcomes include the possibility of expulsion from the University.

11   Learning, Teaching and Assessment

11.1   In accordance with the University QELTA Strategy, all taught doctoral programmes will be learner-centred. Therefore, learners will be expected to take responsibility for their own learning, and the teaching and assessment strategies will be designed to enable independent progress within a supportive framework.

11.2   Guided by the principles of constructive alignment and recognising diversity of learning styles and background, learning will be facilitated and assessed using strategies most appropriate to support achievement of learning outcomes within the discipline.

11.3   Teaching and assessment strategies will enable learners to develop their full potential by recognising and building on prior knowledge and experience and by facilitating development of subject related and transferable skills. Strategies should develop and reward critical, evaluative and enquiry-based approaches to study. At this level it is important that there is interchange and collaboration which can extend the learning experiences for all.

11.4   Assessment influences what and how people learn, and therefore all assessment should be formative. Learners should be given feedback on all aspects of their performance whether or not the assessment contributes to their award.

11.5   Assessment of doctoral degrees will include a major piece of work worth a minimum of 180 credits at SCQF Level 12 and allowing the measurement of multiple outcomes. Dependent on the award, this significant assessment may be a dissertation, an original and creative work, a work-based study, a portfolio or a professional intervention, but must include theoretical evaluation and analysis of a high standard equivalent to a piece of empirical research and must contribute to the development of the subject or profession.

12   Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism

12.1   This institution's degrees and other academic awards are given in recognition of the candidate's proposed achievement. Plagiarism is therefore, together with other forms of academic dishonesty such as collusion, personation, falsification of data, computer and

calculation fraud, examination room cheating and bribery, considered an act of academic fraud and is an offence against University discipline.

12.2   Academic dishonesty and plagiarism will be dealt with by the University's published policies.

12.3   Programme teams should draw students' attention to the learning resources available via the LRC and Student Services.

13   UK Visa and Immigration (UKVI) Regulations

The University is bound by the regulations of the UKVI, including visa requirements for international students. The University will comply in all cases with UKBA requirements such as may be amended from time to time. Relevant advice will be provided to international applicants and students, as appropriate and within the remit of University officers. Advice on visas and immigration should be sought from the University's Recruitment and International Liaison Office (RILO).

Students studying on a Tier 4 Visa may only study on a full-time basis, and be resident within reasonable commuting distance of the University. Information on the responsibilities of students studying on a Tier 4 Visa is available from:

http://www.qmu.ac.uk/graduate-school/current-students/international-students-Tier-4.htm

14   Other information

For details of supporting policies and regulations see the Quality website:
www.qmu.ac.uk/quality

15   Reference

QAA, 2015. QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education, 2015

QMU TAUGHT POSTGRADUATE FRAMEWORK

DESCRIPTION OF PROFESSIONAL DOCTORATES AND EXAMPLES OF POSSIBLE STRUCTURES

Professional Doctorates

Professional doctorates are increasing in popularity, in many disciplines. The main difference between PhDs and professional doctorates is the professional focus of the latter, both in terms of the research training provided, and the research outputs. The professional doctorate has been described as the degree of the scholarly professional, in contrast to the PhD, which is the degree of the professional scholar. The professional doctorate would appear to offer a number of advantages over the traditional PhD route for doctoral level research training for healthcare professionals. In the first instance, entry to the professional doctorate degree is usually restricted to candidates with specified professional qualifications, and professional or clinical practice. This is important given the integral nomenclature of some professional doctorates e.g. Doctor of Nursing. In addition to the professional requirements, entry may also be restricted to candidates who have already completed appropriate advanced postgraduate training at Masters level within a relevant professional area. The effect of such entry requirements is to provide a doctoral candidate who is fundamentally different from the typical PhD student, even those part-time, mature students who make up the majority of doctoral students within the healthcare professions. The structure of the professional doctorate programmes is different to the PhD in that it will contain taught elements of research training (which may be assessed). This provides potential opportunities for students to interact in a learning community.

The outputs from professional doctorates programmes are perceived to be grounded in, and contribute directly to, the distinct body of knowledge that characterises the profession, rather than – as is more common for PhD programmes – an expectation of contribution to the wider body of academic knowledge. The output from the professional doctorate may have more benefit/s for the professions than the output from traditional PhDs.

Examples of Possible Structures

Doctor of Health and Social Sciences

The Professional Doctorate in Health and Social Science programme requires students to successfully accumulate 540 SCQF credit points of which 120 points are accrued at SCQF level 11 prior to entry with the remaining 420 being achieved at SCQF doctorate level 12.

The part-time and full-time programmes are designed for professionals who will normally enter with an MSc or postgraduate diploma in a Health or Social Science related subject. These students will enter with 120 points at SCQF level 11 and undertake 420 points at SCQF level 12. Those applicants with an undergraduate degree are advised to undertake a postgraduate diploma including research methods components or a masters degree, before considering the professional doctorate.

The curriculum of the doctorate is constructed around the SCQF level 12 descriptors with the characteristic generic outcomes reflected in the overall aim and outcomes and aligned with the

learning outcomes of the modular components. This will be facilitated by the construction of an individual learning plan (ILP) that provides an additional structured learning framework for the final Professional Doctorate electronic (e-) Portfolio

The full time programme will be the equivalent of 3 years full time study, and the part time programme can be undertaken over 4 to 5 years.

Doctorate students with 120 points at level 11 then complete the following four modules.

In order to meet the aim and outcomes of the taught doctorate students the following modular components have been identified:

Figure 2: Menu of Modular Components within Taught Doctorate SCQF level 12

Core modules within the programme are:	**Credit points**
• Advancing Professional Practice A	90
• Advancing Professional Practice B	90
• Doctorate Research in Health and Social Science	60
• Thesis	180

Doctor of Health Psychology

Module Title	Credit Rating	Summative Assessment
Research Competence	180	Systematic literature review (6000 words) Dissertation (25,000 words)
Consultancy Competence	90	Report of one consultancy case study (3000 words)
Teaching and Training Competence	90	One 3,000-word case study plus 500-word observer report
Generic Professional Competence	90	Log book based on 2 years of supervised professional practice and reflexive diary (3000 words)

Post-nominal letters

Graduates of the above programmes will be entitled to adopt post-nominal letters as follows:

Doctor of Health Psychology:	D Health Psych
Doctor of Health Sciences:	D Health Sci
Doctor of Social Sciences:	D Soc Sci
Doctor of Health and Social Sciences:	D Health Soc Sci

The post-nominals for the awards of Doctor of Health Sciences and Doctor of Social Sciences could exceptionally also include the name of the profession in brackets if appropriate, for example D Health Sci (Nursing). This would be decided in consultation with the Programme Leader and Dean of School.

QMU TAUGHT POSTGRADUATE FRAMEWORK

PART B – D-LEVEL

THESIS GUIDELINES

1   Lodging the final version of the thesis

The thesis refers to the major piece of assessable work that will be available for publication.

1.1   Copies of the thesis should be submitted in electronic and hard copy for the examination. Once a student has completed the programme, an electronic copy of the final thesis must be submitted for lodging in the Library's open access electronic repository. For all submissions, format and binding must , complywith the regulations set out below.

1.2   A Library Authorisation Form and, for doctoral students, a British Library Doctoral Thesis Agreement Form (both supplied by Registry) must be completed and submitted at the same time as lodging the final electronic of the thesis. This will confirm the agreement of the candidate that the thesis may be made available to readers by the Queen Margaret University Library, may be photocopied, subject to the discretion of the Librarian, and may be lent to the British Library.

1.3   The copy of the thesis submitted for lodging in the Library shall remain the property of the University, with the copyright in the thesis being vested in the author.

2   Restriction of access

2.1   There is normally no restriction of access to a thesis for which a higher degree has been awarded.   The Graduate School Academic Board, acting on behalf of the Research Strategy Committee, will only approve an application for confidentiality in order to enable a patent application to be lodged or to protect commercially or politically sensitive material. A thesis shall not be restricted in this way in order to protect research leads. While the normal maximum period of confidentiality is two years, in exceptional circumstances the Graduate School Academic Board, acting on behalf of the Research Strategy Committee, may approve a longer period.

2.2   Where the Graduate School Academic Board, acting on behalf of the Research Strategy Committee, has agreed that the confidential nature of the candidate's work is such as to preclude the thesis being made freely available in relevant libraries, the thesis shall, during the period of restriction, only be made available to those who were directly involved in the thesis.

3   Regulatory Standards for Format and Binding

All theses for higher degrees awarded by Queen Margaret University must conform to the same format. Regulations in this section are designed to promote legibility, to meet the conventions of scholarly presentation, and to facilitate standard library cataloguing. The

regulations for binding differ for the copies submitted for examination and for those submitted for lodging in the Library; in all other respects, the requirements for format apply to all versions.

3.1   Except with the specific permission of the Graduate School Academic Board, acting on behalf of the Research Strategy Committee, the thesis shall be presented in English.

3.2   **Length**

3.2.1 The text of the thesis, excluding footnotes, references and appendices, should meet the requirements of individual programmes, ranging from 30,000 to 45,000 approximately.

       Normal rules on exceeding word limits apply (ie no more than 10% over). There is no minimum limit. However, it is unlikely that a thesis significantly shorter than the recommended word count will be of sufficient depth to achieve all the outcomes of the award.

3.2.2 Permission to exceed the maximum length of a thesis will only be granted by the Graduate School Academic Board, acting on behalf of the Research Strategy Committee, for exceptional reasons. Permission must be sought at the time the examination arrangements are submitted for approval, well before submission of the thesis. A thesis which is over the word limit, without permission, will not be accepted for examination.

3.2.3 Examiners should be able to understand the thesis from the full argument presented in the main body of the text. Appendices should contain only supporting data and ancillary material. Overlong appendices should be avoided.

3.3   **Presentation of the Thesis**

3.3.1 Theses must be in A4 format.

3.3.2 The thesis must be printed on the right-hand page only. The paper must be white and not less than 80gsm.

3.3.3 Theses should be printed with laser quality printing. Copies may be produced through photocopying, but this reproduction must be of a satisfactory and consistent quality.

3.3.4 A font size of either 11 or 12 point must be used consistently throughout the thesis, except where otherwise specified below for footnotes and references. A slightly larger font size may be applied to headings. It is recommended that either Arial or Times New Roman font is used. Candidates are advised to avoid overuse of print enhancements such as bold, italic and underline.

3.3.5 Text must have at least 1.5 line-spacing, unless otherwise specified below.

3.3.6 The text should be fully justified, expect for tables, diagrams, graphs etc.

3.3.7 The following page-margins must be set:
- 4cm left-hand binding margin (1.5")
- 2cm head margin (0.75")
- 2.5cm right-hand fore-edge margin (1")

- 4cm tail margin (1.5")

3.3.8   Pages must be numbered consecutively (using Arabic numerals) throughout the text, references and appendices. Preliminary pages should be numbered in Roman numerals.

3.3.9   Alternative formats to the above (larger print, coloured paper, etc.) may be requested by the Examiners. This should be discussed in advance of the submission.

3.4   **Structure**

3.4.1   Title Page

The title page must give the following information, all centred and in 20 point:

- the full title of the thesis (in capitals)
- the forename and surname of the author (in capitals)
- the degree for which the thesis is submitted in partial fulfilment (in lower case)
- QUEEN MARGARET UNIVERSITY (in capitals)
- the year of submission (for examination copy) or of award (for final version)

A model of the standard title page to be followed is provided at the end of this appendix.

3.4.2   Abstract

A one-page, single-spaced abstract of approximately 300 words must be bound into the thesis. The abstract should provide a synopsis of the thesis describing the nature and scope of the work undertaken and of the contribution made to the discipline. Students must provide a list of keywords for cataloguing purposes.

3.4.3   Acknowledgements

Any assistance received shall be acknowledged in a single-spaced acknowledgement section. It is customary for the candidate's supervisors and School to be mentioned. Also included here should be a statement of any internal or external collaboration or advisory links. The Collaborating Establishment that has been involved in the programme must be duly acknowledged.

Where the thesis was part of a collaborative group project, this must be recorded in the acknowledgements. The candidate's individual contribution to the collaboration should be explicitly identified in the body of the thesis.

3.4.4   Contents

A contents list, and lists of any tables, diagrams, graphs and illustrations, should be provided, with page numbers identified and aligned right. The contents page(s) should be printed with 1.5 line-spacing.

3.4.5   Diagrams, tables, illustrations etc.

These should be numbered, labelled with a legend, and placed as near to the relevant text as feasible. Good quality colour photocopies of diagrams, illustrations and photographs may be used rather than the originals.

3.4.6   Footnotes

Where footnotes are used, these should be single-spaced in 10 point, and preferably placed at the foot of the relevant page.

3.4.7   Quotation and referencing in the text

Short quotations in the running text should be enclosed in inverted commas. Longer quotations should be separated from the running text, and indented, with single line-spacing. Any material consulted, especially including quotations, must be clearly and adequately referenced in the text.

3.4.8   References section

The thesis must include a full and adequate References section immediately after the main body of text, and before any appendices. Referencing must be done consistently, with adherence to a recognised style such as Harvard, for more details please see the University's Write and Cite guidelines (http://www.qmu.ac.uk/lb/IFS_Harvard.htm). References should be printed with single line-spacing, in 10 point.

3.4.9   Appendices (see also Regulation 3.2.3)

The text of any appendices may be single-spaced.

3.5   **Copies of published material**

The candidate shall be permitted to publish material in advance of the thesis in discussion with the supervisory team. Reference shall be made in the thesis to any such work. Where material is jointly authored the student must clarify the extent of his or her role. Copies of published material should be provided and either bound in with the thesis or placed in an adequately secured pocket at the end of the thesis.

3.6   **Binding**

Candidates are responsible for the costs of production of all copies of the thesis, including the costs of binding.

3.6.1   An individual volume should not be more than 6.5cm thick. A thicker thesis should be sub-divided into two volumes.

3.6.2   For examination

Copies of the thesis submitted for examination should be in a "soft" temporary binding. All copies should be securely fixed by means of a glued spine, a spiral binding, or a comb

binding, so that the pages remain secure when the volume is fully opened and pages cannot be added or removed.

The title page, printed on card, should serve as a front cover. A piece of card should also be placed at the end as a back cover. The covers may be laminated or protected with sheets of clear plastic.

3.6.3   Final version

One electronic copy of the thesis must be submitted for lodging in the Library's open access electronic repository. This must be submitted as a single file and not split by chapter, section or similar. The electronic copy must be submitted before the student can graduate.

Additional supporting material (such as maps or images) should be provided separately. If any non-digital material accompanies the thesis, this should be discussed with LRC staff, who will advise on the best format for submission.

3.6.4   Students may wish to order hard bound versions of the final thesis for their own records. Students order such hard copies at their own discretion and their own expense.

3.6.5   The following guidance is offered to bookbinders:

- The thesis should be sewn and bound in strong, black cloth covers. The front and rear boards shall have sufficient rigidity to support the weight of the work when standing upright.

- The lettering should be in gold, in a non-serif font with a type size of 24 point and in upper case capitals. The only exception to this is the lettering for Doctorate and Masters, which should be printed exactly as approved by Senate.

- The front board must bear the title of the work and the name of the author (forename and surname) only. It is not usual for the author's other qualifications to be given.

- The spine should read vertically downwards, left to right in one line from the top to the foot of the spine: Forename and Surname (top), Doctorate or Masters (middle), and Year of Award (foot). There should be a minimum of a 5cm space at the foot of the spine to allow catalogue-numbering by the Library. Where applicable, the volume number (in Arabic numerals) should be given after the Year of Award as in the following: Volume 1, Volume 2.

3.7   Outsize documents (e.g. maps) and non-print media, should be placed in a pocket attached by the bookbinder to the inside back cover of the thesis. In the case of examination copies, these items should be submitted in a clearly labelled large envelope together with the thesis. Each item should also be individually labelled, with relevant details including the candidate's name.

REALISING EVIDENCE BASED PRACTICE: A SYSTEMIC INVESTIGATION OF CORE KNOWLEDGE PROCESSES IN MENTAL HEALTH

RUTH LOTHIAN

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Professional Doctorate of Health and Social Sciences

QUEEN MARGARET UNIVERSITY

2012

Professional Doctorate Administrative Processes

Stages	Graduate School Involvement	School Office	Other roles e.g. PL, Admissions, Programme Committee
Application	None	None	Applies to central Admissions Department Application forwarded to Programme Leader (PL) Interview arranged by PL
Offer/Rejection	None	None	PL returns file to Admissions Department Admissions send out offer letter PL keeps list of new students and gives to School Office
Matriculation	PL provides Graduate School Officer with a full list of Prof Doc students Online Matriculation Organising Staff Cards and email account (no telephone account)	None Ensure that students can access the timetable online Student files maintained in School Office	List of students forwarded to GQE by PL

	Desk allocation		
Induction	Joint PhD/Prof Doc Induction	None	PL liaises with RST organiser to share sessions.
Supervision	GSAB to approve supervisory teams and record on ISIS	None	PL negotiates with individuals, Heads of Division, and PDoS and teams confirmed by Dean.
Annual Progress Reports	Sent out and received by Graduate School Officer

Feedback to Programme Committee/GSAB | Sends out letter annually to all students in August alerting them to need to proceed in timely manner.

Notes whether annual report received. | Programme Committee has an overview of all students, at Nov meeting. |
Changes *(e.g. Suspension, mode of study etc.)*	GSAB to approve changes	Records any suspensions/withdrawals Update ISIS	Programme Committee notes suspensions/ withdrawals
Programme Committee Meetings *(twice yearly)*	Graduate School Officer takes minutes	School Office arrange meeting	PL refers items for agenda to Graduate School Offiver, confirms agenda and chairs meeting
Exam Boards *(twice yearly)*	Graduate School Officer takes minutes	School office liaises with external examiner, ensures he/she has received all work. Books room. If necessary arranges videoconference or telephone. Module lists and student transcripts	

Two core modules, APP A and APP B.	None Graduate School Officer to attend Programme Committee and Exam Board	Maintain ISIS Collate submissions, distribute to internal markers, and once work marked, sends to external examiner. Feedback kept electronically and emailed to student.	PL receives feedback from external examiner, addresses any issues that arise. Ensures timely feedback to students. PL chairs programme committee where student progress is debated under reserved business.
Thesis	Examiners appointed through GSAB (3 months minimum prior to submission). Student submits thesis to Graduate School Officer and guidance sent out to examiners Arranges final examination Tell student outcome (and follow up as appropriate).	None	DoS completes "nomination of examiners form" and submits it to GSAB, at least 3 months prior to submission. GQE informed that Taught Modules are passed before thesis, or going to Senate for award.

List of abbreviations:

GQE – Division of Governance and Quality Enhancement
DoS –Director of Studies
PL – Programme Lead
RST – Research Skills Training
RSC – Research Strategy Committee
GSAB – Graduate School Academic Board