UCL Student and Registry Services Division
Academic Services Department

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Introduction to Section 1: Research Degree Students - Programme of Study

The General Regulations apply to all University College London (UCL) MPhil, PhD, EngD and MD(Res) students.

overarching regulations and students should read these regulations together with local regulations for the Department and Faculty housing their programme of study. EngD students should also read these together with the Section 3 Specific Programme regulations.

[Doctor in Engineering [EngD]: Section 3, Specific Programme Regulation (PDF)](#)

1 Admission to research degree programmes

1.1 Standard Qualifications for Admission: MPhil/PhD Programmes

The normal minimum entrance qualification for registration for the MPhil degree or the PhD degree is:

i) an upper second class honours degree of a UK university or an overseas qualification of an equivalent standard obtained after a programme of study extending over not less than three years in a university (or educational institution of university rank), in a subject appropriate to that of the programme to be followed; or

ii) a registrable qualification appropriate to the programme to be followed awarded by a UK university in Medicine, Dentistry or Veterinary Studies; or a qualification of an equivalent standard appropriate to the programme to

v)

1.5 Alternative Qualifications for Admission to a Research Degree

Applicants possessing alternative qualifications may also be considered by UCL for registration.

i)   An applicant who possesses a degree or overseas qualification of equivalent standard obtained after a programme of study extending over three years or more in a university (or educational institution of university rank) in an appropriate subject and who, although they do not meet the normal entry standard defined in paragraph 1.1 above, but by evidence of their background and experience satisfy UCL as to their fitness to follow the programme. Where such an applicant cannot present evidence that they possess the necessary background and experience, they may be considered by UCL for registration, provided they meet appropriate qualifying conditions prescribed by UCL.

ii)   Applicants who possesses a qualification obtained by written examination other than those covered above if UCL is satisfied that the candidate's general education, scholarship, training and experience are suitable for the programme which they wish to follow and that they are at least as well qualified as the candidates who are able to satisfy the entrance requirements in one of the ways prescribed above.

UCL may prescribe a qualifying examination for such an applicant prior to admission.

Further guidance on alternative qualifications for admission to a research degree

Departments wishing to admit such an applicant, as described above, must obtain written authorisation from the Dean of Students (Academic), via the UCL Admission Office. An applicant for registration may also be required to pass a qualifying examination (see paragraph 1.4). Applicants are required to meet UCL's English Language proficiency requirements. (See link at the end of this section.)

Link for Section 1.5

UCL's English Language Proficiency Requirement

2 Registration, transfers and courses of study

2.1 Dual Registration

A student is not permitted to be formally registered for one programme of study at UCL at the same time as being formally registered (or re-sitting examinations) for another programme of study at UCL or any other Higher Education Institution.

Further guidance on dual registration

Students can accept an offer of a place from UCL when they are still formally registered with another Higher Education Institution, or if they are re-sitting examinations. However, they may not formally register with UCL until they have completed their registration with another institution.

2.2 Application and Initial Registration

An applicant for a PhD degree will be registered initially for the MPhil degree.

Further guidance on application and initial registration

i)   All successful applicants, with the exception of the EngD and other specialist doctorate programmes, are initially registered for an MPhil degree, except where the applicant is exceptionally well qualified and UCL has given special permission for initial registration for the PhD degree.

ii)   Every student must complete enrolment as instructed within two weeks of the start of their research programme and must undertake to comply with the conditions of enrolment.

iii)   An applicant for registration is required to produce for inspection by UCL the original documentary evidence of their qualifications either before or at registration   i.e. the original diploma or certificate of the awarding body. An applicant for the MD(Res) degree will be registered at UCL in the names under which he/she has been registered with the GMC.

2.3 Exemption from Part of a Programme of Study

UCL may exempt from part of the programme of study of the MPhil/PhD degree, research degree students who have commenced a programme of study for the MPhil or PhD degree (or equivalent degree) of another university in the United Kingdom, provided that the programme of study followed at UCL is not less than one calendar year; or its equivalent in part-time study.

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Further guidance on exemption from part of a programme

i)

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Link for Section 2.4

Online student research log

Code of Practice for Graduate Research Degrees

2.5 Attendance Requirements

A programme must be pursued continuously except by special permission of UCL. Students must be in a position to meet all the requirements determined for their studies.

    i)   With the exception of non-resident MPhil/PhD programmes (see 2.10), students, whether full-time or part-time, are expected to centre their academic studies on UCL. Students should ensure they are able to attend UCL in person for teaching and meetings as required by their supervisors.

    ii)   Students must obtain approval before they leave to collect or study material remote from UCL or work in remote facilities. (See link at the end of this section.)

Links for Section 2.5

Changes to your registration status

2.6 Length of Programme: MPhil/PhD and MD(Res) Programmes

The lengths of UCL research degree programmes are as follows:

    i)   the length of a MPhil/PhD programme is normally 3 years full time and 5 years part-time.

    ii)   the length of the MD(Res) is normally two calendar years of full-time or part-time study.2.65 Tm 0 Tc[( )] TJE/5Tm2.41 268.85 Tm85 Tm2.41 2(De)-3(t0241)Trs onC1

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In the case of registration for the PhD and the MPhil degree, unless prior exemption from a part of the programme has been agreed, students must be registered for at least 3 calendar years full-time, or 5 calendar years part-time, before they will be eligible to adopt Completing Research Status.

In the case of registration for the MD(Res) degree, students must be registered for at least two calendar years before they will be eligible to adopt Completing Research Status.

Further guidance on length of programmes

i)   Requests to submit a thesis earlier than the minimum periods of registration specified in the regulation above may be considered by the Chair of the Research Degrees Committee. Requests should be made in writing via the Student Centre (see link at the end of this section) and should include a statement of support from the Supervisor and/or Head of Department. The Research Degrees Committee will monitor the outcome of such requests by scrutiny of examiners' reports on the candidates' theses. Students and staff should note that early submission of a thesis will not be considered as an extenuating circumstance when deciding the outcome of the examination of a thesis.

ii)   Students who submit early would be liable for tuition fees up to the date of the submission of the thesis but would not be liable for tuition fees thereafter.

iii) UCL also runs certain Research Council funded MPhil/PhD programmes which run for a four year duration (e.g. the MRC Wellcome Trust funded programmes in Neuroscience).

iv)   Interruption of Study

     Interruption of Study may be granted on the authorisation of the Director of Student Services, on behalf of the Research Degrees Committee provided that a statement of support from the Principal Supervisor and/or Head of Departmen468.58 3

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a) The period requested will be

2.9   Transfer between MPhil/PhD and MD (Res) Degrees

A student may, with the permission of UCL, transfer from the MD(Res) degree to the MPhil/PhD degree, provided they have not entered for the examination of an MD(Res) degree; or from the MPhil/PhD degree to the MD(Res) degree provided they have not entered for the examination of an MPhil or PhD degree.

Students wishing to transfer from an MPhil/PhD to an MD(Res) degree, or vice versa, should contact the Student Records team (email studentrecords@ucl.ac.uk) in the Student Centre. (See link at the end of this section.)

Link for Section 2.9

UCL Student Centre

2.10   Non-Resident MPhil/PhD: Registration and Attendance

Students registered on a non-resident MPhil/PhD programme shall attend UCL on at least one occasion; this must be the meeting at which their upgrade to PhD is decided.

In addition a student registered on a non-resident MPhil/PhD programme shall meet his or her Supervisor(s) in person on at least two other occasions, one at the beginning and one at the end of the programme, but not necessarily in the UK.

Students and Supervisors are required to be in regular communication during the whole period of the programme by, for example, telephone, email, Skype etc.

Students on the non-resident MPhil/PhD programme are required to use the Online Research Student Log. (See link at the end of this section.)

Further guidance on non-resident MPhil/PhD registration and attendance

i)   Admission procedures for the non-resident MPhil/PhD programme do not differ from that of other research students who require special permission from UCL before starting their registration. A Department/Division wishing to make an offer to an applicant for a specially approved non-resident MPhil/PhD programme is required to submit a statement of the case for acceptance, via Registry and Academic Services Division, to the Chair of the Research Degrees Committee [RDC]. The statement must include evidence that the overseas institution whe30.(o)6(-3(n)≯m1745 o)4(a 230.rsea)-4(s in)-3(st

Portico record in the normal way. Visiting Research Students are not required to have both a Principal and Subsidiary Supervisor as is the case for UCL students; they typically have one Supervisor allocated to oversee their work.

Visiting Research Students are not required to use the Online Research Student Log.

Guidance for UCL Supervisors on supervising visiting research students is available. (See link at the end of this section.)

Link for Section 2.11

[Guidelines for supervising visiting research students (PDF)](#)

3   Completing research status

3.1   PhD, MPhil and EngD: Completing Research Status (CRS)

All research students who have completed their approved period of registration may register as CRS students while they write up their theses. Transfer to CRS status is

authority.

CRS is permitted for a maximum period of one calendar year (full-time) or two calendar years (part-time). CRS registration cannot be interrupted; a student who is prevented from submitting a thesis for reasons beyond his or her control may apply for an extension, as detailed in Point

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3.4   Extensions to the Completing Research Period

A student who cannot submit a thesis for examination before the end of CRS due to circumstances outside his or her control may apply for an extension

Principal Supervisor with the retired member of staff

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Subsidiary Supervisor

iv) Supervisors can be appointed from institutions with an approved agreement with UCL, e.g. Cancer Research UK (CRUK). Such supervisors must have the status of honorary members of UCL Staff. In all circumstances UCL has an expectation that these Supervisors will undertake their role in accordance with the Graduate School's Code of Practice for Graduate

Research Degrees (this document).

v) For more information on the role of the Supervisor see the Code of Practice for Graduate Research Degrees Link for Section 4.1

Link for Section 4.2

Code of Practice for Graduate Research Degrees

4.2 Supervisors: Eligibility

The list of UCL staff categories eligible to act as Principal and/or Subsidiary Supervisors can be found on the Human Resources website. (See link at the end of this section.)

UCL determines the eligibility of staff in these categories to supervise research degree students using the following criteria:

A Principal Supervisor should normally:

i) have satisfactorily completed any probationary period attached to his/her appointment;

ii) have expertise in the area of the proposed research;

iii) have had previous experience of at least one successful PhD, EngD, MD(Res) or MRes supervision, as appropriate, within a supervisory team (defined as having taken a student all the way through to a research degree award)

Subsidiary Supervisor should normally:

i) have expertise relevant to the area of proposed research

ii) be familiar with the standards required for MPhil/PhD/EngD/ MD(Res)/MRes research.

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ii) Where a supervisor exceeds the maximum number of students under

demonstrate that there are mechanisms in place to ensure adequate contact with the student and appropriate support for the supervisor, such as a large supervisory team and/or a reduction in other workloads.

iii) For example, an individual may act as Principal Supervisor to 4 full-time students and 1 part-time student while acting as Subsidiary Supervisor for 2 part-time students. This is the equivalent of 5 full-time students and is within the head count of 9 students. Consideration should be given to the other duties of the member of staff concerned. Departments/Divisions may wish to recommend an upper limit on the number of students supervised by a single member of staff that is lower than that set out above.

iv) Part-time staff appointed as supervisors should supervise no more than 6 full-time research students on a pro-rata basis.

4.4 Declaration of Personal Interest

All members of staff are required to declare any personal relationships with any student they are asked to supervise, or are already supervising.

Further guidance on declaring personal interest

i) A supervisor who declares such a personal relationship prior to appointment as Supervisor for the student in question shall not be permitted to undertake supervision of that student, whether as Principal or Subsidiary Supervisor.

ii) A supervisor who declares such a relationship after having been appointed as Principal Supervisor for the student in question (unless the declaration is made within six months of appointment, in which case the supervisor shall not be permitted to continue in any supervisory capacity) shall no longer continue as Principal Supervisor but may continue to advise the student in

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4.5   Transfer of Supervisor to another Institution

Where a Principal Supervisor transfers to another institution, students assigned to that Supervisor shall be assigned to another Principal Supervisor   if they choose to remain registered at UCL   normally by the Departmental/Divisional Graduate Tutor. Should a student wish to continue to work under the supervisor who has transferred, he or she may consider applying to transfer registration to the supervisor's new institution, providing he or she is not in the final year of the programme.