

Regulations for Postgraduate Study

1. Regulations for the Preparation and Submission of Postgraduate Theses for Research Degrees

Graduation ceremonies are held in June and November but degrees may be conferred in *absentia* at any meeting of the Senatus Academicus. Every candidate who wishes to graduate in person must normally do so in the academic year following the date of completion of their studies and will only be permitted to graduate once for the same degree. Any student who fails to apply to graduate in the academic year following becoming eligible to graduate will automatically graduate in-absentia and will not normally be permitted to attend a future in-person ceremony.

1. In order to have a degree conferred, whether in person or *in absentia*, candidates must (a) give notice of their intention to submit a thesis or other work which is required, and (b) submit by the dates specified below:

- (a) Notice of intention to submit not less than four clear months before the intended date of graduation.
- (b) Submission not less than three clear months before the intended date of graduation.

2. A thesis or other work submitted for higher degree must:

- (i) contain either at the beginning or at the end a summary of its salient points;
- (ii) be accompanied by a separate abstract not exceeding 300 words in length. The abstract should show the author and title of the thesis in the form of a heading (the University reserves the right to publish this abstract and the title of the thesis and to authorise others to do so as it sees fit);
- (iii) be accompanied by a declaration signed by the candidate that the thesis has been composed by themselves, that it has not been accepted in any previous application for a degree, that the work of which it is a record has been done by themselves, that any personal data have been processed in accordance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act 2018, and that all quotations have been distinguished by quotation marks and the sources of information specifically acknowledged. If any results were obtained partly in association with others, the nature and extent of this help, if substantial, must be specifically acknowledged in the declaration;
- (iv) be accompanied by the relevant forms, available from the Registry, stating any restrictions to printed or electronic access of the thesis which the candidate wishes to impose, should the thesis be sustained. (No limitation shall be for a period greater than five years from the date the thesis is submitted to the University Library.)

3. Candidates will not be permitted to submit a thesis to the University of Aberdeen for examination that has been examined, or is intended to be examined, at another Higher Education Institution, unless there is a collaborative agreement between the two institutions.

4. Theses must normally be written in English. In exceptional circumstances a thesis on a topic in a language or literature other than English may be written in that language providing:

- (a) That the application has the written consent of the candidate's supervisor(s) and Head(s) of School;
- (b) That the candidate has applied to Senatus Academicus and received its consent;
- (c) That the summary and abstract required under Regulation 2(i) and (ii) are written in English.

Students studying a PhD in Gaelic Studies are exempt from the above requirement.

5. Research students should note that, in the case of candidates examined by thesis only, unless the specific permission of the Senatus Academicus is obtained (such permission being granted only on the grounds of the exceptional nature of the subject matter or, in the case of candidates registered for a degree in Law, on grounds of exceptional circumstances) the normal maximum length of a PhD, EngD, Integrated PhD in Divinity, MD or ChM is 100,000 words; the normal maximum length of an EdD or DCouns thesis is 50,000 words, the normal maximum length of an MPhil thesis is 70,000 words; and the normal maximum length of a Master's degree thesis is 40,000 words.

For theses submitted in Gaelic language, the following normal maximum lengths apply: 120,000 words for a PhD, 84,000 words for an MPhil, and 48,000 words for a Masters by research.

In each case this includes appendices and footnotes but excludes bibliographies, statistical and computational compilations, illustrative material necessary to an argument (diagrams, maps, tables etc.), and, where appropriate, other materials such as field notes and transcriptions of interviews. If in doubt, the student and supervisory team should consult, at the earliest opportunity, with the Senatus Academicus.

Any data compilation, or material such as field notes or transcriptions of interviews should not be included in a separate file to the final pdf thesis. This material must be anonymised, as appropriate, and then securely attached to the thesis prior to submission.

Notes: The above prescriptions do not apply to editions.

6. Every thesis sustained shall be deposited electronically, in non-editable pdf format, in the University Library and shall be the property of the University, but the copyright shall belong to the candidate.

- (a) The general conditions under which a thesis may be consulted, borrowed or copied shall be determined by the Librarian under authority of the Library Committee, but shall comply with any instructions given by the candidate under Regulation 2(iv).
- (b) Theses are normally made available for consultation. The Librarian will however withhold a thesis from consultation if requested to do so by the Senatus Academicus, provided that
 - (i) The Senatus Academicus, upon the recommendation of the Head of School of the candidate, is satisfied (1) that the thesis contains material that is or could be the subject of a patent application, and (2) that before the thesis is deposited active steps have been or are being taken to secure a patent; or
 - (ii) in the most exceptional circumstances, and for a limited period only, in accordance with supplementary regulation 2(iv), the Senatus Academicus is satisfied that the thesis contains material that is confidential for reasons other than of a patent application.

In the case of (i), the period for which the thesis may be withheld from consultation will end when a provisional patent has been granted, and will not normally exceed twelve months. In the case of (ii), a written justification must be presented by the Head of School concerned to the Senatus Academicus, before the thesis is deposited in the University Library. A thesis will be withheld from consultation under this regulation only in the most exceptional circumstances.

7. When a thesis is deposited in the Library the Librarian shall insert in it a statement of the conditions of its availability. Every person consulting or borrowing the thesis shall be required by the Librarian by means of a written undertaking to conform to the provisions of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988. This allows copying from the thesis for the purpose of research or private study but prohibits publication of the whole or any substantial part of the thesis without the copyright owner's consent, and the use of quotations etc. from the thesis without proper acknowledgement.

2. Research Students and Research Fellows

The regulations for the encouragement of special study and research, the admission of Research Students and the appointment of Research Fellows, are made under Scottish Ordinance No. 12, approved by HM the Queen in Council on 12 September 1960.

ORDINANCE

1. Ordinance No. 61 (General No. 23) of the Commissioners appointed under the Universities (Scotland) Act, 1889, is hereby repealed, and references to that Ordinance shall be construed as references to the present Ordinance.

RESEARCH STUDENTS

2. The Senatus Academicus, with the approval of the University Court, shall have the power to make regulations under which any person who has given satisfactory evidence of fitness to engage in special study or research may be admitted to the University as a Research Student.

RESEARCH FELLOWS

3. The University Court shall have power to appoint Research Fellows, on such terms and conditions as the University Court after consultation with the Senatus Academicus may determine.

GENERAL

4. Research Students and Research Fellows shall have access to and the use of the University laboratories, libraries and museums, subject to the provisions of any Ordinances and under such other conditions as the University Court, after consultation with the Senatus Academicus, may determine.

5. *Not reproduced.*

3. HIGHER DEGREES

Degree of Doctor of Letters (DLitt)

The Degree of Doctor of Letters (DLitt) is conferred under Scottish Universities Ordinance No. 6, approved by HM the Queen in Council on 13 May 1959. The ordinance relates to the Universities of Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Glasgow and St Andrews.

ORDINANCE

1. The Degree of Doctor of Letters (DLitt) may be conferred in each of the Scottish Universities.

2. Graduates of any of the Scottish Universities may offer themselves for the Degree of DLitt in that University after the expiry of seven years from the date of their first graduation therein.
3. Persons who hold such office or offices in each of the said Universities as the Senatus Academicus may approve who are not already graduates of the University in which they hold such post or appointment may offer themselves for the Degree of Doctor of Letters in the University in which they hold office, after the expiry of four years' continuous tenure of one or more of these offices, posts or appointments, provided always that not less than seven years shall have elapsed from the date of their first graduation in any University.
4. Candidates for the Degree of DLitt shall present a published work or works accompanied by a signed declaration that they are the author thereof.
5. The Senatus Academicus shall appoint such Professors, Readers or Lecturers in the University as it may think suitable to examine the work or works submitted by a candidate for the degree and the University Court shall, after consultation with the Senatus Academicus, appoint an external examiner or examiners to act along with them. Such external examiner or examiners shall be of recognised eminence in the subject of the work or works presented by the candidate. The candidate shall be awarded the degree only if in the opinion of the Senatus Academicus, on the recommendation of these examiners, the body of the work shall be held to constitute an original and substantial contribution to humane learning.
6. The fee to be paid for examination for the degree shall be determined from time to time by the University Courts of the four Universities.
7. The Senatus Academicus of each University shall have power to make such additional regulations governing the conferment of the degree as may be approved by the University Court.
8. The Degree of DLitt shall not be conferred upon persons who have not satisfied the conditions hereinbefore set forth, provided always that the Senatus Academicus of any of the four Universities may, at its discretion, permit candidates to offer themselves for the degree under the regulations previously in force during a period not exceeding five years from the date on which this Ordinance shall come into operation; and provided always that it shall be in the power of the Senatus Academicus of any of the four Universities to confer the Degree of DLitt *honoris causa* under such regulations as may be made by the Senatus Academicus with the approval of the University Court.
- 9-10. *Not reproduced.*

Degree of Doctor of Music (DMus)

The Degree of Doctor of Music (DMus) is conferred in accordance with Resolution No. 40 of 1971, approved by the University Court on 6 July 1971.

REGULATIONS

1. Candidates for the Degree of DMus must *either* (a) have held a degree of the University of Aberdeen for at least seven years before offering themselves for the degree, *or* (b) have held such whole-time appointment in the University of Aberdeen as the Senatus Academicus may approve for at least four years immediately preceding their candidature, provided always that at the time of offering themselves for the degree not less than seven years shall have elapsed from the date of their first graduation in any University recognised for this purpose by the University Court on the recommendation of the Senatus Academicus.
2. Candidates for the Degree of DMus shall present a published work or works accompanied by a signed declaration that they are the author or composer thereof.
3. The Senatus Academicus shall appoint such Professors, Readers or Lecturers in the University as it may think suitable to examine the work or works submitted by a candidate for the degree and the University Court shall, after consultation with the Senatus Academicus, appoint an external examiner or examiners to act along with them. Such external examiner or examiners shall be of recognised eminence in the subject of the work or works presented by the candidate. The candidate shall be awarded the degree only if in the opinion of the Senatus Academicus, on the recommendation of these examiners, the body of work shall be held to constitute an original and substantial contribution to the art of music.
4. The fee to be paid for examination for the degree shall be determined from time to time by the University Court.
5. The Degree of DMus shall not be conferred upon a person who has not satisfied the conditions hereinbefore set forth, provided always that it shall be in the power of the Senatus to confer the degree *honoris causa* under such regulations as may be made by the Senatus with the approval of the University Court.

Degree of Doctor of Education (DEd)

The Degree of Doctor of Education (DEd) is conferred *honoris causa tantum*.

Degree of Doctor of Science (DSc)

The Degree of Doctor of Science (DSc) is conferred under Ordinance of the University Court of the University of Aberdeen No. 70, approved by HM the Queen in Council on 2 October 1962.

ORDINANCE

1. The Degree of Doctor of Science (DSc) may be conferred by the University of Aberdeen.
2. Every candidate for the degree must either be a graduate of the University of Aberdeen or have held in the University of Aberdeen such appointment or appointments as the Senatus Academicus may approve, and must comply with any regulations made under this Ordinance.
3. The Senatus Academicus may, with the approval of the University Court, make regulations on any matters for giving effect to this Ordinance, including the following: the qualifications required of candidates for the degree; the submission of work required of such candidates; the examination of work submitted for the degree.
4. The University Court on the recommendation of the Senatus Academicus shall appoint two or more persons of whom at least one shall be a person other than a member of the academic staff of the University, to examine the work submitted by a candidate for the degree.
5. The Degree of Doctor of Science shall not be conferred upon persons who have not satisfied the conditions hereinbefore set forth, except (a) that the Senatus Academicus may, during a period not exceeding two years from the date on which this Ordinance shall come into operation, permit candidates to offer themselves for the degree under the regulations in force at that date; and (b) that it shall be in the power of the Senatus Academicus to confer the Degree of Doctor of Science *honoris causa*.
- 6-7. *Not reproduced*.

REGULATIONS

1. Candidates for the degree must *either*:
 - (a) have held a degree of the University of Aberdeen for at least seven years before offering themselves for the degree, *or*
 - (b) have held a whole-time appointment as a Professor, Reader, Lecturer, Assistant or Research Fellow in the University of Aberdeen (or an honorary appointment in that University and a whole-time appointment in a local institution listed in General Regulation 13 for Research Degrees) for at least four years immediately preceding their candidature, provided always that at the time of offering themselves for the degree not less than seven years shall have elapsed from the date of (i) their first graduation in any University recognised for this purpose by the University Court of the University of Aberdeen on the recommendation of the Senatus Academicus, or, exceptionally, (ii) their obtaining some other qualification recognised for this purpose in the same manner.
2. As evidence of their fitness to receive the degree, candidates shall present published work in pure or applied science. In order to be accepted for admission, candidates must submit a Curriculum Vitae, copies of the publications it intended will be assessed (any number of publications can be submitted for the final examination, but for the purposes of application a maximum of 10 should be submitted), and a conspectus or summary of the work submitted, not exceeding two thousand words in length, intended to assist the examiners in their assessment. Submitted publications should be numbered and numbers should be referred to in the conspectus. Candidates will be expected to have made a major contribution to each paper. In cases of joint authorship, candidates must indicate the extent of their contribution. The published work must all be in the public domain.

Applications must be submitted to the Head of the relevant School who will make a recommendation to the Senatus Academicus as to whether the application should be accepted or not. Final approval must be given by the Senatus Academicus.

3. Work previously submitted for any degree may be included in the submission, if, in the opinion of the candidates, its inclusion will facilitate a proper appreciation of their research and provided that it has at some time been published.

If work previously submitted for any degree is included, candidates must supply a declaration signed by themselves, stating which part of the work has been so submitted, for what degree it was submitted, and the result of such submission.

If joint work is submitted, candidates must supply a declaration signed by themselves indicating the extent of their contribution to it.

4. (a) If the candidate is a member of the academic staff of the University, at least two of the examiners appointed shall not be members of the academic staff.

(b) The examiners shall submit independent reports to the DSc Committee. The DSc Committee shall not recommend to the Senatus Academicus that the degree be conferred unless the examiners advise that the work is a record of original research of high distinction in pure or applied science. If the reports of the examiners do not substantially agree the DSc Committee will recommend the appointment of a further examiner, who shall be an external examiner.

5. Candidates whose work has not been considered worthy of the degree may not again offer themselves for the degree within three years of the date on which their work was first submitted to the University of Aberdeen. In no circumstances may candidates offer themselves for the degree more than twice.

6. The fee or fees to be paid by candidates shall be determined annually by the University Court.

Degree of Doctor of Engineering (DEng)

The Degree of Doctor of Engineering (DEng) is conferred *honoris causa tantum*.

Degree of Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS)

The Degree of Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS) is conferred *honoris causa tantum*.

Degree of Doctor of Divinity (DD)

The Degree of Doctor of Divinity (DD) is conferred *honoris causa tantum*.

Degree of Doctor of Laws (LLD)

The Degree of Doctor of Laws (LLD), which may be conferred *honoris causa*, is also conferred as a Research degree in terms of Scottish Universities Ordinance No. 1 approved by HM the Queen in Council on 31 July 1957. The ordinance relates to the Universities of Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Glasgow and St Andrews.

ORDINANCE

1. (i) Graduates who have taken a degree in a Scottish University may offer themselves for the Degree of Doctor of Laws (LLD) in that University after the expiry of seven years from the date of such graduation.

(ii) It shall be open to the Senatus Academicus of each University, with the approval of the University Court, to exempt from the requirement in the foregoing sub-section respecting previous graduation in that University persons who for a continuous period of not less than four academic years have held such office or offices in that University as the Senatus Academicus may approve, provided that not less than seven years shall have elapsed from the date of their first graduation in any University.

2. All candidates for the Degree of Doctor of Laws shall present written work not previously submitted for any degree of any University which shall be approved for the award of the degree only if the Senatus Academicus deems the work to be of sufficient merit as constituting an original and substantial contribution to the study of the Law. The work shall be accompanied by a declaration signed by the candidates that it has been composed by themselves. If the work has not been published in full, then, before being submitted, it shall have been published so far and in such manner as the Senatus Academicus accepts as reasonable in the circumstances. Two copies of the work, if approved for the degree, shall be deposited by the candidates in the University Library.

3. The Senatus Academicus of each University shall appoint such Professors, Readers or Lecturers as it may think suitable to examine the work submitted by candidates who may offer themselves for the Degree of Doctor of Laws and the University Court shall, after consultation with the Senatus Academicus, appoint one or more external examiners to act along with them in adjudicating on the merits of the work, submitted by the candidates. Every such external examiner shall be a person of recognised eminence in the subject of the work presented by the candidate.

4. The fee to be paid by the candidate for the Degree of Doctor of Laws shall be fixed from time to time by the University Courts of the four Universities. The said fee shall be payable on each occasion on which the candidates offer themselves for the degree.

5. The Degree of Doctor of Laws shall not in any case be conferred upon any person who has not satisfied the conditions herein before set forth, provided that nothing in this Ordinance shall be held to restrict or govern the conferment of that degree *honoris causa* according to the terms of Ordinance by which the conferment of the Degree of Doctor of Laws *honoris causa* is now or may hereafter be regulated.

6. The Senatus Academicus of each University shall have power to make such additional regulations governing the conferment of the degree as may be approved by the University Court.

7. *Not reproduced.*

REGULATIONS

The following regulations were approved by the Senatus Academicus on 4 June 1958:

1. Persons who for a continuous period of not less than four academic years have held an appointment or appointments in the University as Professor, Reader, or Lecturer, or as Research Fellow in the University of Aberdeen, may, though not a graduate of that University, offer themselves as candidates for the Degree of LLD if they are otherwise qualified under Section 1 of the Ordinance.
2. The fee to be paid by a candidate for the Degree of Doctor of Laws shall be determined by the University Court.

Degree of Doctor of the University (DUniv)

The Degree of Doctor *Honoris Causa* (DHC) is conferred *honoris causa tantum*.

Degree of Master of the University (MUniv)

The Degree of Master of the University (MUniv) is conferred *honoris causa tantum*.

4. General Regulations for Postgraduate Qualifications

Qualifications at postgraduate level (other than those degrees referred to above) are conferred in accordance with Resolution No. 210 of 1998, which was approved by the University Court, and came into force on 24 March 1998. This Resolution provides that candidates for a higher degree or other postgraduate award who, at the date when this Resolution came into force, had commenced their studies under the regulations previously in force shall be permitted to complete the requirements for that award under those previous regulations, but if they have not done so within six years from that date shall be considered to have abandoned their candidature. Alternatively, such candidates may, after application to Senatus Academicus, be permitted to complete the requirements under the Regulations contained in this Resolution.

Candidates subject to UK immigration law may be subject to a regulatory framework implemented by the UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI). Where these regulations are more stringent than those stipulated within the University's own regulations, those of the UKVI will take priority.

5. Supplementary Regulations for the Degree of Master of Science (MSc) in Physician Associate Studies

Candidates subject to UK immigration law may be subject to a regulatory framework implemented by the UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI). Where these regulations are more stringent than those stipulated within the University's own regulations, those of the UKVI will take priority.

1. Every candidate for the degree of Master of Science (MSc) in Physician Associate Studies are required to comply with the requirements of admission to the degree programme. Possession of these qualifications does not of itself guarantee admission. In addition to satisfying any academic and Occupational Health requirements for admission, all candidates must satisfactorily complete a Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) check and, if they are not UK residents, receive police clearance from their home country, and attend for interview if required. In the rare circumstance that an applicant/candidate has a notifiable health condition, relevant Occupational Health Service advice will be followed.
2. The curriculum for the degree can be undertaken by full-time study only.
3. The courses for the degree shall cover 2 years. The curriculum to be followed and the degree assessments shall be prescribed in the Programme Specification listed in [the University Calendar](#)
4. (i) Candidates shall not normally be permitted to present themselves for an end of course assessment unless they have appropriately undertaken all required instruction and activities in that academic year, and subsequently obtained a class certificate. The validity of a class certificate shall be limited to the academic year in which it is awarded. Any candidate who has been subject to attendance monitoring and warned of being 'at risk' of losing their class certificate) may lose their class certificate with no further warning if this behaviour is repeated for the course concerned.
(ii) The Student Progress Committee (SPC), on behalf of the Senate, may exceptionally determine the conditions under which a candidate, who has previously achieved the attendance requirements for the award of a class certificate or successfully completed a course, may be exempted in whole or in part from instruction and/or assessment in any component for the degrees.

- (iii) The SPC, on behalf of the Senate, may terminate, at any time, the studies of a candidate who persistently fails to meet the minimum attendance requirements or perform the required work of the courses, for which they are registered.
5. The assessment for each course within the MSc in Physician Associate Studies shall be determined by the Senate. In terms of Regulation 9 of the General Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Awards, the examiners for the degree shall be the academic staff and health and social care professionals who are involved in the delivery of courses qualifying for the degree, and such external examiners as may be appointed by the University Court.
 6.
 - (i) In each academic year candidates shall not normally be afforded in any course more than two opportunities of summative assessment, including continuous assessment, clinical and/or written examinations as appropriate. Only results obtained at first sitting shall contribute towards Distinctions, Honours and Commendations, and/or class grading.
 - (i) Where a candidate successfully completes a course on more than one occasion, only the credit points obtained on the first occasion may be counted toward the requirements necessary for progression and graduation.
 - (ii) Candidates shall not be permitted to progress to the next programme year until they have successfully passed all summative assessments in one academic year. Candidates who fail to pass completely the summative assessments shall be required to discontinue their studies for the degree and be excluded from further assessment.
 - (iii) Where a candidate (due to medical reasons or other proven good cause) has taken the resit examinations as a first diet, and/or for these same reasons been unable to take the resit examinations at the prescribed time, the candidate will be eligible to sit at the next available sitting, which is normally in the following academic year.
 7.
 - (i) The University's [Policy and Procedures on Student Absence](#) provides a framework through which a candidate can report absence and/or establish that their academic performance has been adversely affected by medical circumstances or other good cause.
 - (ii) It is expected that a student who undertakes to sit an exam or submit an assignment, is fit to do so and there are no known extenuating/mitigating circumstances.
 - (iii) Acute illness and/or other personal circumstances which affect a candidate's performance at examination must be notified in writing, along with supporting documentary evidence, to the Extenuating Circumstances for review. However, the decision to waive the regulation on discontinuation following failure of a repeat year shall lie with SPC on behalf of Senate.
 8.
 - (i) The degree shall not be conferred on candidates who have not passed all the degree assessments prescribed by Regulation 4, by the end of the period allowed.
 - (ii) The degree may be awarded with Commendation or Distinction, according to candidates meeting the predetermined academic standards for these awards.
 - (iii) Students who are unsuccessful in completing the MSc in Physician Associate Studies will have their completed courses and credits evaluated to determine if an exit award can be granted.
 9.
 - (i) Any health, conduct, behaviour or other issue that could give rise to the question of whether or not a candidate's fitness to practise is impaired will be considered and determined through the School of Medicine, Medical Science and Nutrition's Fitness to Practise Processes. Senate, on the recommendation of the Fitness to Practise Committee (Medicine & Dentistry), may suspend or terminate the studies of candidates for the degree who, following Fitness to Practise Processes, are judged to have fitness to practise impairment. In exceptional circumstances only, the Head of the School of Medicine, Medical Sciences and Nutrition or the Director of the Institute of Education in Healthcare and Medical Sciences may suspend the matriculation of, or exclude from specified programme activities, any candidate in respect of whom there is a question of whether or not their fitness to practise is impaired, pending further process. In this Regulation, any reference to impaired fitness to practise is to be taken as a reference to that concept as defined in s. 35C (2) of the Medical Act 1983, and as explained in the General Medical Council's current published guidance.
 - (ii) The above will apply during any time away from the MSc Physician Associate programme if it is the candidate's intention to return to programme and ultimately seek graduation.