Guidance for Examiners for the Degree of Ph.D. under Special Regulations

Criteria for the Award of the Ph.D. Degree under Special Regulations
The University may award the Ph.D. Degree under the Special Regulations to a graduate of the University who has submitted published work which, in the opinion of the Examiners, satisfies the following requirements:

Doctoral degrees are awarded to those who have demonstrated all of the criteria below:

1. a significant contribution to the field of study through the creation and interpretation of new knowledge, connection of previously unrelated facts or the development of new theory or revision of older views;
2. submission of work of a quality in whole or in part of a standard to merit publication (whether or not subsequently published);
3. provides evidence of the acquisition of knowledge and a detailed understanding of applicable techniques for research and advanced academic enquiry;
4. is of a quality and quantity to reflect three years of full-time postgraduate study/five years part-time study.

In addition to the publications submitted, a candidate may, as part of the application, submit his/her own statement in support of the application. Some Degree Committees require such a statement, whilst others leave it to the candidate's discretion. A maximum length to any such statement will have been determined by each Degree Committee. The purpose of such a statement is to enable the candidate to provide an indication of the submission's overall structure, any thesis running through the material submitted, the contribution to knowledge made (in the candidate's opinion) by the submission and of the scholarly context within which the work falls. A candidate whose submission includes jointly authored work may wish to use the statement to elaborate on his/her contribution to such work. Candidates are advised that the statement should be confined to the works actually submitted.

The Board of Graduate Studies have agreed to regard electronic publications as acceptable provided that they (a) meet the Board's other criteria for submission and (b) hard copies of any such publications are provided if required by the Degree Committee.

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Independent Reports

As an Examiner, you are requested to write an independent report which should provide the Degree Committee with a detailed technical description of the work under examination and a full and frank assessment of its merits in the light of the criteria set out above. Your report should be written before the oral examination is held. You are asked to end your report with a short summary containing a definite recommendation whether or not the Degree be awarded. If you find it necessary to suspend judgement until after the oral examination or, if the candidate's performance in the oral examination is such as to cause you to alter the recommendation you have already made, you may state your final recommendation in an appendix to your report. You are asked to restrict your report to the works submitted by the candidate. Your report should be signed and dated.

If the candidate has submitted works published jointly with others, he or she should also have submitted evidence as to the extent of his or her contribution to those works; you may, however, ask the Secretary of the Board of Graduate Studies to invite the candidate to submit further evidence of the extent of his or her contribution to the works concerned.

All the work submitted remains the property of the candidate and should be returned to the Secretary of the Degree Committee with your report. You are therefore asked to refrain from making marginal notes in any of the work submitted by the candidate.

Oral Examination

A candidate for the Ph.D. Degree under the Special Regulations must also satisfy the Examiners at an oral examination. After making your independent report you and the other Examiner should jointly examine the candidate on the published work submitted and on the general field of knowledge within which it falls. Both Examiners must be present at the oral examination and must sign a joint recommendation form confirming the outcome. The final recommendation should be confined to the question whether or not the candidate be approved for the Ph.D. Degree. There is no provision under the Special Regulations for the award of a lower degree although a candidate who is unsuccessful on a first submission may submit a fresh application for the Degree on one more occasion. Examiners are particularly asked to avoid indicating to the candidate at the oral examination the probable outcome of the candidature.

Consideration of Reports

If the Degree Committee, after considering the Examiners' reports, decides to recommend that the Degree be awarded, the reports are next considered by the Board of Graduate Studies. This Board has members from many subjects. You are therefore asked to provide, in addition to your full report, a summary of your conclusions (of not more than 150 words in length), from which members of the Board may readily understand your opinion of the merit of the candidate.

Confidentiality

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Examiners are asked to bear in mind that their reports will be made available to the candidate alongside the formal outcome of the examination.

**Fees and Expenses**

The fee paid to an individual appointed by the Degree Committee to consider whether a *prima facie* case exists for detailed examination of the application shall form part of the fee, if that individual is subsequently appointed as an Examiner. These fees include Value Added Tax and no further payment by reason of that tax can be made.

Each Examiner should apply for payment of the appropriate fee and for the reimbursement of expenses incurred, including those for travelling, by completing the form provided and sending it to the Secretary of the Degree Committee with the report. Subsistence allowance may be claimed by an Examiner, at rates determined from time to time by the Finance Committee of the University, for any period of absence from the Examiner’s normal place of residence in connection with these duties.

The Board are aware that Examiners may incur quite substantial expenses in connection with the examination, and the Board would be obliged if Examiners would request the Secretary of the Degree Committee concerned to forward the details of expenses to the Board, who will arrange for these to be paid as quickly as possible.

**Further information**

If you are in any doubt as to what is required, or if you have any procedural questions, please do not hesitate to contact either the Secretary of the relevant Degree Committee or the Board of Graduate Studies on studentregistry@admin.cam.ac.uk.

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