

Regulations for Senior Doctoral Degrees

INTRODUCTION

For the purpose of the Regulations for the senior doctoral awards, the University has defined “published work” as publicly available research outputs.

Regulations follow for the award of the senior doctoral degrees shown below:

- Doctor of Letters (DLitt);
- Doctor of Science (DSc);
- Doctor of Laws (LLD)

REGULATIONS

1. Eligibility

1.1 An applicant for a higher doctorate awarded by the University shall normally be a Graduate of the University of not less than two years’ standing and may be admitted to candidature during or subsequently to:

- (i) the second year after having qualified for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy;
- (ii) the third year after having qualified for the degree of Master of Philosophy;
- (iii) or the tenth year after having qualified for the degree of Bachelor in any Faculty.

1.2 A full-time member of the teaching, research, administrative, library or technical staff of the University who is a graduate of another University may become a candidate provided:

- (i) that they have taken their initial degree at least ten years previously, and
- (ii) that they have been a full-time member of the staff of the University for at least five years.

2. Criteria

2.1 The required condition for admission to the degree is that, in the judgement of the University, a candidate’s published work will be seen as internationally significant

and represent a substantial contribution to the advancement of knowledge. A candidature may be based on joint work provided an estimate can be made of the candidate's share and that it is possible to apply to it the criteria used in judging independent work.

3. Submission

3.1 A Notice of Candidature Form [DSc Application Form](#) must be submitted to the Vice-Chancellor, along with three copies of each of the published works, and three sets of the following documents:

- (i) particulars of the candidate's degrees, other qualifications and research experience, including all particulars required to establish eligibility under the University's regulations;
- (ii) a summary, of four or five pages in length, giving an indication of the field or fields in which the candidate has specialised, and indicating also the contribution to knowledge in that field which in their opinion their work has made;
- (iii) where work involves joint authorship or collaboration, a statement signed by each collaborator indicating the nature and amount of work done in collaboration.
- (iv) a statement of how much, if any, of the work has been submitted or is being currently submitted in candidature for any other degree.

3.2 At the discretion of the Senior Doctoral Degree Committee, the candidate may be summoned to an interview.

3.3 Notice may be given at any time during the academic year, but if it is given later than 31 January, the result of the candidature will not ordinarily be determined at such date as to allow the candidate, if successful, to be admitted to the degree in that academic year.

3.4 One copy of every work approved by the Internal Committee shall be deposited in the University Library, and the other in the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth.

3.5 The fee for admission (£2,000) to candidature must be forwarded to the Vice-Chancellor, together with the official form of notice of candidature.

4. Conduct of Examinations

4.1 The award of the Senior Doctoral Degree will be on the basis of the candidate's publications (normally the 20 most significant publications or a smaller number if the publications are of appropriate scale and scope).

4.2 An application for entry to a Senior Doctoral Degree shall initially be scrutinised by the Senior Doctoral Degree Committee whose role will encompass 3 stages: -

(a) Initial vetting of the application to establish if it can proceed

(b) Communication with the external referees (chosen by the Senior Doctoral Degree Committee)

(d) Discussion of the referees comments and final decision on the award of the Senior Doctoral Degree

4.3 If the Senior Doctoral Degree Committee agrees that an application can proceed, the Senior Doctoral Degree Committee will select three external referees to examine the candidate's statement and publications. If Senior Doctoral Degree Committee determines that an application cannot proceed, 75% of the prescribed fee will be refunded.

4.4 The Senior Doctoral Degree Committee will determine whether the conditions of the award of the Senior Doctoral Degree have been met in the light of the individual reports from the three external referees.

5. Notification of Results and Award of Degree

5.1 Every candidate will be notified by the Chairman of the Senior Doctoral Degree Committee whether or not they are to be recommended for the award of the degree.

5.2 A diploma under the Seal of Aberystwyth University shall be subsequently delivered to each candidate who has been awarded the Senior Doctoral Degree.

5.3 If an electronic version of a Senior Doctoral Degree submission is presented to the Library, the Library will add a digital copy of the Senior Doctoral Degree submission, consisting of the author's review, contents list, bibliography, to the Aberystwyth Research Portal where it shall be freely accessible to all. The

University Archives will add to their collection a print copy of the submission for which the Senior Doctoral Degree has been conferred. The Library recommends that the author also adds a copy of each of the published works to Senior Doctoral Degree (subject to copyright regulations).

5.4 Appeal Procedure: candidate to write to the Vice-Chancellor outlining the alleged procedural irregularity.

6. Re-entry to Examination

A candidate who fails to qualify for the award of a Senior Doctoral Degree will be required on re-entry to comply with the regulations in force at that time.

Standing Order 22

Senior Doctoral Degrees

Instructions for the Conduct of Examinations for the Degrees of DLitt, DSc, DScEcon and LLD

1 Candidates for the degrees of DLitt, DSc, DScEcon and LLD shall send to the Pro Vice-Chancellor three copies of the works they desire to submit to the judgement of the University. The works may be forwarded to the Pro Vice-Chancellor at any time during the academic year, but a candidate whose works are received after 31 January in any year ought not to expect, ordinarily, to be admitted to a degree in that year.

2 All works submitted by a candidate for one of the above degrees shall be considered by an Internal Committee consisting of:

- (i) The Vice-Chancellor, and
- (ii) two other persons appointed by the Vice-Chancellor (normally one Pro Vice-Chancellor and a senior academic in a relevant subject area).

3 If satisfied that a prima facie case has been established for referring the works for detailed examination for the degree in question, the Internal Committee shall appoint three assessors. If the Internal Committee is not satisfied it shall inform the Pro Vice-Chancellor, who shall notify the candidate: two-thirds of the fee paid shall be returned to the candidate, together with three copies of the work concerned.

4 Members of the Internal Committee and the assessors should be entirely independent of the candidate and each other. Assessors should declare an interest if they:

- (i) plan to employ the candidate
- (ii) plan to co-publish with the candidate
- (iii) are involved, or have been, with the candidate in a close personal relationship of any kind

(iv) have a close personal, professional or contractual relationship with any other member of the examination committee.

5 Each of the three appointed assessors shall send to the Pro Vice-Chancellor a detailed and independent report as to the scope, quality and originality of the works, stating whether in their opinion the degree should be awarded.

6 The reports of the three assessors shall be submitted by the Pro Vice-Chancellor to the Internal Committee which shall present a report, including a recommendation as to the award of the degree, to the Research Degrees Board. The Research Degrees Board shall make the final decision on the candidature.

7 In making their report on the candidature for the doctorate, referees are requested to consider the following questions, viz:

(i) Does the candidate's work show command of the subject?

(ii) Does the work possess originality and merit worthy of the degree for which it has been submitted?

(iii) Does the work make a substantial contribution to the advancement of knowledge of such a nature as to make the candidate an acknowledged expert in the field covered?

(iv) Can the candidate be considered worthy of the award of the degree?

(It would assist the University materially in the final consideration of the work if, in answering these questions, assessors would express briefly the principal reasons that have led them to their conclusions).

8 Assessors shall be reminded that the purpose of requiring publication is to ensure that the work submitted has been available for criticism by relevant experts, and that assessors are given discretion to disregard any of the work submitted if, in their opinion, the work has not been so available for criticism either on account of its

inaccessibility or because it has been submitted for the degree at too short an interval after its publication.

9 The written reports of the assessors shall be deposited in the archives of the University.

Aegrotat and Posthumous Awards

All taught degree schemes contain interim awards of certificate and diploma which may be made to students unable to complete their studies. Degree regulations also allow for awards to be made without all credits being completed. Aegrotat and posthumous awards will normally be considered only when no interim award is available, no degree award may be made within the regulations, and the student is/was close to completion of the award.

Aegrotat Awards

The Senate Examining Board may make an Aegrotat award where a candidate is prevented by illness or other special circumstances from completing the final examined/assessed elements of a taught scheme of study. The Board must have appropriate supporting evidence.

In doing so, the Senate Examining Board should be satisfied that:

- the candidate's prior performance shows beyond reasonable doubt that they would have passed but for the illness/event which occurred.
- The candidate is unlikely to be able to return to complete their studies at a later date.

The candidate must confirm in writing that they are willing to accept an Aegrotat award; if not, normal conventions on resit opportunities and extensions to award time limits shall apply. An Aegrotat degree, diploma or certificate shall be unclassified and, in all other respects, un-graded. An Aegrotat award does not necessarily entitle the holder to registration with a professional body, or exemption from the requirements of any professional qualification which might otherwise be associated with the scheme of study concerned.

No candidate shall be exempted from submitting and defending a research thesis or from presenting a Master's dissertation (or equivalent) where such is required. It follows, therefore, that Examining Boards may not recommend the award of Aegrotat

research degrees, and that Aegrotat taught Master's degrees may be awarded only where the work done for the dissertation can be examined.

Posthumous Awards

Senate Examining Boards (or the Chair of the Board, acting executively) may confirm the award of a posthumous degree on the recommendation of the Departmental/Institute Examination Board where sufficient credits have been passed at the level of the award for it to be clear, beyond reasonable doubt, that the candidate would have qualified for the award. A posthumous award shall be unclassified. For example, a candidate for a three year initial degree should have progressed to the final year and completed the first semester successfully.

In the case of a Master's award, where a candidate has died before the submission of a dissertation or equivalent, a posthumous degree may be recommended provided that the Board is able to consider available evidence of the work completed by the candidate. Normally, such evidence shall be supplied by the candidate's supervisor/advisor, who shall also submit a report for consideration by the examiners including an argued recommendation regarding the award of the degree based on the following criteria:

- enough of the research project must have been completed to allow a proper assessment to be made of its scope.
- the standard of the research work completed must be of that normally required for the award of the degree in question, and must demonstrate the candidate's grasp of the subject.
- the written material available (draft chapters, published work, work prepared for publication, presentations to conferences/ seminars, progress reports by the candidate for their department/institution/ sponsor) must demonstrate the candidate's ability to write a dissertation or equivalent of the required standard.

A posthumous degree, diploma or certificate shall be unclassified.

Postgraduate Research Degrees

A Postgraduate Research Degree Examining Board may recommend to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research) that the award of a posthumous degree be made where a candidate has died

- after the thesis has been examined, or submitted for examination, but before the oral examination (where required) can be held.

In such a case, the Board shall consider the work presented and, provided that it is satisfied that the work is the candidate's own (by means of the receipt of reports from the Head of Department and the supervisor), may decide to recommend that an award be made.

- before submitting the thesis.

In such a case, the Board shall consider available evidence of the research work completed by the candidate. Normally, such evidence shall be supplied by the candidate's supervisor, who shall also submit a report for consideration by the examiners. The Head of the Department concerned shall also submit an argued recommendation regarding the award of the degree. The following criteria must also be satisfied:

- enough of the research project must have been completed to allow a proper assessment to be made of the scope of the thesis;
- the standard of the research work completed must be of that normally required for the award of the degree in question, and must demonstrate the candidate's grasp of the subject;
- the written material available (draft chapters, published work, work prepared for publication, presentations to conferences/seminars, progress reports by the candidate for their department/institution/ sponsor) must demonstrate the candidate's ability to write a thesis of the required standard.