

Regulations for Postgraduate Research Degrees

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Target Audience	
People who need a detailed knowledge of the Regulations	Dean of Education; Academic Registrar; Director of Postgraduate Research; PGR Administrators
People who need a broad understanding of the Regulations	PGR students and their supervisors
People who need to know that the Regulations exist	All academic and administrative staff

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 These regulations cover all postgraduate research degrees at the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine (LSTM) leading to one of the following awards:
- Master of Philosophy (MPhil)
 - Doctor in Philosophy (PhD)
 - Doctor of Medicine (MD)

2 Awards and Authority to Award

- 2.1 Research programmes leading to the degree of PhD must be undertaken in accordance with the provisions of the Code of Practice for Postgraduate Research Degrees.
- 2.2 To ensure that the LSTM research environment and awards are consistent with those within the higher education section nationally and internationally, these regulations use as a reference point the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (FHEQ), Level 8.

2.3 For students registered on an MPhil programme:

- 2.3.1 The degree of MPhil will be conferred upon students who have demonstrated:
- a systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of their academic discipline, field of study or area of professional practice
 - a comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to their own research or advanced scholarship
 - originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline
 - conceptual understanding that enables the student to:
 - evaluate critically current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline
 - evaluate methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses.
- 2.3.2 Students may be awarded the degree of Master of Philosophy (MPhil) if they fail to meet the criteria for the award of the degree of PhD in accordance with Section 9 of these Regulations.

2.4 For students registered on a PhD programme:

- 2.4.1 The degree of PhD will be conferred upon students who have demonstrated;
- the creation and interpretation of new knowledge, through original research or other advanced scholarship, of a quality to satisfy peer review, extend the forefront of the discipline, and merit publication
 - a systematic acquisition and understanding of a substantial body of knowledge which is at the forefront of an academic discipline or area of professional practice
 - the general ability to conceptualise, design and implement a project for the generation of new knowledge, applications or understanding at the forefront of the discipline, and to adjust the project design in the light of unforeseen problems
 - a detailed understanding of applicable techniques for research and advanced academic enquiry
- 2.4.2 Students who fail to meet the criteria for the award of the degree of PhD may be awarded the degree of Master of Philosophy (MPhil), in accordance with the provisions of Section 9 of these Regulations.

2.5 For students registered on an MD programme:

- 2.5.1 The degree of MD will be conferred upon students who have demonstrated:
- the creation and interpretation of new knowledge, through original research or other advanced scholarship, of a quality to satisfy peer review, extend the forefront of the discipline and merit publication
 - a systematic acquisition and understanding of a substantial body of knowledge which is at the forefront of some branch of medicine or in some science directly related to medicine.
 - the general ability to conceptualise, design and implement a project for the generation of new knowledge, applications or understanding at the forefront of the discipline, and to adjust the project design in the light of unforeseen problems
 - a detailed understanding of applicable techniques for research and advanced academic enquiry
- 2.5.2 Students who fail to meet the criteria for the award of the degree of MD may be awarded the degree of Master of Philosophy (MPhil), in accordance with the provisions of Section 9 of these Regulations.

2.6 Research degrees may be undertaken in collaboration with an approved institutional partner and may be studied as a single LSTM award or as part of a dual or joint award, subject to a formal agreement between the partner institutions.

2.7 Research degrees may be undertaken either wholly at an LSTM campus or wholly or partly outside LSTM under approved conditions as defined in the *Code of Practice on Postgraduate Research Degrees*.

2.8 LSTM's full definition of Research is provided in the *Code of Practice on Postgraduate Research Degrees*.

3 Admission

- 3.1 Applicants will be admitted in accordance with the *Code of Practice on Admissions*.
- 3.2 In order to be admitted onto a PhD or an MPhil programme, an applicant must provide evidence of entrance qualifications of a type and standard deemed appropriate by LSTM and, where appropriate, its institutional partners. Applicants will normally have obtained, or expect to obtain, either a First Class or Upper Second Class Honours degree, a Master's degree or a degree of a comparable standard from outside the UK.
- 3.3 In order to be admitted onto an MD programme, an applicant must have held a medical degree for a least two years that was awarded by a university whose qualifications confer eligibility for registration with the General Medical Council.
- 3.4 Applicants will be required to demonstrate proficiency in English. Details of the required level of English language competence will be published on the LSTM website.
- 3.5 Students may be admitted to study on a PhD, MD or an MPhil programme having requested to transfer into this programme from another equivalent institution, having satisfied the normal entrance qualifications and having provided evidence of previous satisfactory progress in their research. Students will be admitted onto the programme on a designated year of study and their expected completion date will be established on entry.

4 Mode of Study, Submission of Thesis and Periods of Registration

- 4.1 Students may be admitted to study on research degree programmes on a full-time or part-time basis. The mode of study of the student will be determined on admission.
- 4.2 Students shall normally be expected to submit their thesis within the following periods:
 - 4.2.1 **Master of Philosophy:**
 - Students studying for an MPhil on a full-time basis shall normally be expected to submit their thesis within two calendar years of their initial registration (excluding any periods of suspension of studies).
 - Students studying on a part-time basis shall normally be expected to submit their thesis within four calendar years of their initial registration (excluding any periods of suspension of studies).
 - 4.2.2 **Doctor of Philosophy:**
 - Students studying for a PhD on a full-time basis shall normally be expected to submit their thesis within four calendar years of their initial registration (excluding any periods of suspension of studies).
 - Students studying on a part-time basis shall normally be expected to submit their thesis within six calendar years of their initial registration (excluding any periods of suspension of studies).

4.2.3 **Doctor of Medicine:**

- Students studying for an MD on a full-time basis shall normally be expected to submit their thesis within four calendar years of their initial registration (excluding any periods of suspension of studies).
- Students studying on a part-time basis shall normally be expected to submit their thesis within six calendar years of their initial registration (excluding any periods of suspension of studies).

4.3 The **minimum period of registration** permitted before submission of the thesis shall normally be as follows:

4.3.1 **Master of Philosophy:**

- no less than one calendar year for full-time study
- no less than two calendar years for part-time study

4.3.2 **Doctor of Philosophy:**

- no less than two calendar years for full-time study
- no less than four calendar years for part-time study

4.3.3 **Doctor of Medicine:**

- no less than two calendar years for full-time study
- no less than four calendar years for part-time study

4.4 For all programmes, students or their sponsors will be liable to pay the tuition fee appropriate to their mode of study for at least the minimum period of their registration. If after the minimum period the student is formally transferred to the status of 'thesis submission pending', a reduced fee will apply.

4.5 The **maximum period of registration** for students studying on a research degree programme, including any period of suspended study, extensions to the expected submission date, and periods of thesis submission / resubmission pending, are as follows:

4.5.1 **Master of Philosophy:**

- five calendar years for full-time study
- seven calendar years for part-time study

4.5.2 **Doctor of Philosophy:**

- seven calendar years for full-time study
- nine calendar years for part-time study

4.5.3 **Doctor of Medicine:**

- seven calendar years for full-time study
- nine calendar years for part-time study

4.6 Unless otherwise restricted to fewer hours by the terms of any sponsorship agreement, and subject to any restrictions on a student's visa, a full time student on a research degree programme may undertake other work for up to 15 hours per week (including teaching duties) during term time. Term-time is defined in this context as any period outside the student's annual leave entitlement of 25 working days (including LSTM closed days and closed days of any partner institution in which the student is working as part of a split-site or off-site agreement), plus bank holidays.

5 Registration and Academic Progress

- 5.1 Applicants shall register as students of LSTM at the beginning of their programme and shall be re-registered annually on the anniversary of first registration subject to their satisfactory academic progress as defined in the *Code of Practice on Postgraduate Research Degrees (Appendix 4: Procedure for Monitoring the Academic Progress of Postgraduate Research Students)*.
- 5.2 Students on approved joint or dual research degree programmes shall register at both partner institutions for the joint or dual award.
- 5.3 Students are required to complete appropriate postgraduate researcher development activities in accordance with the *Code of Practice on Postgraduate Research Degrees (Appendix 4: Procedure for Monitoring the Academic Progress of Postgraduate Research Students)*.
- 5.4 Students may request a suspension or extension of studies in accordance with the *Code of Practice on Postgraduate Research Degrees (Appendix 7: Procedure for Requesting an Extension, Withdrawal or Suspension of Studies for Postgraduate Research Students)*.
- 5.5 Students must obtain ethical approval for their research where appropriate.

6 Registration Transfers

- 6.1 Students may be granted exceptional permission by the Director of Postgraduate Research to transfer from full-time to part-time study. Where permitted, the number of years of study undertaken at full-time intensity will be converted as if studied at part-time intensity for the purposes of a re-calculation of both the expected submission date and the permitted minimum period of submission of the thesis as provided for in Section 4.3.
- 6.2 Students may be granted exceptional permission by the Director of Postgraduate Research to transfer from part-time to full-time study. Where permitted, the number of years of study elapsed at part-time intensity will be converted as if studied at full-time intensity for the purposes of a re-calculation of the expected submission date. The minimum and maximum submission periods will then apply as for full-time study.
- 6.3 Where a student's registration is transferred from PhD to MPhil, either as a result of decisions made under the *Code of Practice on Postgraduate Research Degrees (Appendix 4: Procedure for Monitoring the Academic Progress of Postgraduate Research Students)* or following approval by the Director of Postgraduate Research of a request by the student, the maximum period permitted for submission of the thesis for the MPhil degree will be three calendar years from the date of their initial registration for full-time students and six years for part-time students, in accordance with Section 4.5.

7 Supervision

- 7.1 All supervision of students on research degree programmes will be undertaken in accordance with the *Code of Practice on Postgraduate Research Degrees (Appendix 9: Procedure for the Supervision of Postgraduate Research Students)*.
- 7.2 All research students must be supervised by at least two suitably qualified members of academic staff. At least one member of the supervisory team must be a member of LSTM staff. Under specific institutional agreements, LSTM may recognise appropriately qualified non-LSTM staff with the status of 'Recognised Supervisor'. Approval is the responsibility of the Director of LSTM and may be rescinded if performance by a 'recognised supervisor' is considered unsatisfactory.
- 7.3 There must be a clearly identified Primary Supervisor who will be the student's main point of contact and will normally have the largest percentage of supervisory input. The Primary Supervisor will have the most appropriate expertise in the area of the individual project and must be a member of LSTM staff.

8 Thesis Submission

- 8.1 Students should submit for assessment: a substantial body of original work, in the form of one of the following:
- 8.1.1 **Master of Philosophy**
- a thesis of no more than 60,000 words containing the results of the student's original research, which may contain published papers integrated into the thesis in a coherent and structured manner; or
 - a collection of original material developed specifically in pursuit of the degree, together with a written thesis of no more than 25,000 words which contextualises that work within an academic framework. The submission must be equivalent in substance to that expected of an MPhil awarded on the basis of a thesis alone and represent at least as great a contribution to the subject.
- 8.1.2 **Doctor of Medicine**
- a thesis of no more than 100,000 words containing the results of the student's original research, which may contain published papers integrated into the thesis in a coherent and structured manner
- 8.1.3 **Doctor of Philosophy**
- a thesis of no more than 100,000 words containing the results of the student's original research, which may contain published papers integrated into the thesis in a coherent and structured manner; or
 - a substantial collection of original, creative material developed specifically in pursuit of the degree, together with a written thesis of no more than 50,000 words which contextualises that work within an academic framework. The

submission must be equivalent in substance to that expected of a PhD awarded on the basis of a thesis alone and represent at least as great a contribution to the subject.

- 8.2 Students must submit the thesis for examination in accordance with the *Code of Practice on Postgraduate Research Degrees (Appendix 8: Procedure for Submission of a Research Degree Thesis)*.
- 8.3 The work in the thesis submitted by a student must be their own work and the submission of a thesis for examination will be regarded as a declaration of that fact.
- 8.4 The thesis submitted for examination must not include work for which a degree or other qualification has already been awarded except, for the sake of completeness, where some previous work has been substantially further developed, in which case all such work must be clearly identified.

9 Examination

- 9.1 Following submission of the thesis, a *viva voce* examination will be held, at which the student will be required to defend the subject of the thesis, or other submitted work, and matters relevant thereto.
- 9.2 There must be a minimum of two examiners to examine the thesis, one Internal Examiner and one External Examiner, appointed in accordance with the *Code of Practice on Postgraduate Research Degrees (Appendix 3: Procedure for Examination of a Research Degree Thesis)*. A second External Examiner will normally be appointed where the student is a member of LSTM staff or a member of staff at an institution involved in a collaborative partnership with LSTM (Section 2.5). This requirement may be waived at the discretion of the Director of Postgraduate Research for full-time PhD candidates who are designated as LSTM staff solely as a requirement of their funding body.
- 9.3 Where deemed appropriate, and in all re-submission *viva voce* examinations, a senior member of LSTM academic staff will be appointed by the Director of Postgraduate Research as an independent Chair of the examiners.
- 9.4 Where the examiners cannot agree on a recommendation, a further External Examiner will be appointed and will examine the thesis in accordance with the *Code of Practice on Postgraduate Research Degrees (Appendix 3: Procedure for Examination of a Research Degree Thesis)*.
- 9.5 The examiners shall recommend one of the following:
 - 9.5.1 **For students registered on an MPhil programme:**
 - that the degree of MPhil be conferred;
 - that the degree of MPhil be conferred subject to the student making minor modifications to the thesis within three months of the formal notification by LSTM of the outcome of their *viva voce*, which do not alter the substance of the thesis in any significant or fundamental manner, to the satisfaction of

one or more of the examiners, as may be agreed between them;

- that the student be permitted to make a subsequent application for the degree of MPhil on one occasion only, provided that the application is made no later than one calendar year from the date of the formal notification by LSTM of the outcome of their *viva voce*. A thesis may only be re-presented for the award of MPhil as the result of a recommendation made in accordance with this provision, and shall be revised having due regard to the examiners' observations. A second *viva voce* examination will normally be held, but this may be waived at the discretion of the examiners;
- that the student be deemed not to have attained the standard required for the degree of MPhil and that no further opportunity for examination be allowed.

9.5.2 For students registered on a PhD programme:

- that the degree of PhD be conferred;
- that the degree of PhD be conferred subject to the student making minor modifications to the thesis within three months of the formal notification by LSTM of the outcome of their *viva voce*, which do not alter the substance of the thesis in any significant or fundamental manner, to the satisfaction of one or more of the examiners, as may be agreed between them;
- that the student be permitted to make a subsequent application for the degree of PhD on one occasion only, provided that the application is made no later than one calendar year from the date of the formal notification by LSTM of the outcome of their *viva voce*. A thesis may only be re-presented for the award as the result of a recommendation made in accordance with this provision, and shall be revised having due regard to the examiners' observations. A second *viva voce* examination will normally be held, but this may be waived at the discretion of the examiners;
- that the degree MPhil be conferred upon the student, subject to minor modifications being made to the thesis, if required, within three months of the formal notification by LSTM of the outcome of their *viva voce*, to the satisfaction of one or more of the examiners, as may be agreed between them;
- that the student be permitted to make a subsequent application for the degree of MPhil on one occasion only, provided that the application is made no later than one calendar year from the date of the formal notification by LSTM of the outcome of their *viva voce*. A thesis may only be re-presented for the award as the result of a recommendation made in accordance with this provision, and shall be revised having due regard to the examiners' observations. A second *viva voce* examination will normally be held, but this may be waived at the discretion of the examiners;

- that the student be deemed not to have attained the standard required for the degree of PhD or MPhil and that no further opportunity for examination be allowed.

9.5.3 For students registered on an MD programme:

- that the degree of MD be conferred;
- that the degree of MD be conferred subject to the student making minor modifications to the thesis, which do not alter the substance of the thesis in any significant or fundamental manner, to the satisfaction of one or more of the examiners, as may be agreed between them
- that the student be permitted to make a subsequent application for the degree of MD on one occasion only, provided that the application is made no later than one calendar year from the date of the formal notification by LSTM of the outcome of their viva. A thesis may only be re-presented for the award of MD as the result of a recommendation made in accordance with this provision, and shall be revised having due regard to the examiners' observations. A second *viva voce* examination will normally be held, but this may be waived at the discretion of the examiners;
- that the degree of Master of Philosophy be conferred upon the student, subject to, if required, minor modifications being made to the thesis to the satisfaction of one or more of the examiners, as may be agreed between them;
- that the student be permitted to make a subsequent application for the degree of MPhil on one occasion only, provided that the application is made no later than one calendar year from the date of the formal notification LSTM of the outcome of their viva by. A thesis may only be re-presented for the award of MPhil as the result of a recommendation made in accordance with this provision, and shall be revised having due regard to the examiners' observations. A second *viva voce* examination will normally be held, but this may be waived at the discretion of the examiners;
- that the student be deemed not to have attained the standard required for the degree of MD or MPhil and that no further opportunity for examination be allowed.

Annex of Modifications		
Version	Date of issue	Details of modification from previous version
0.2	20.7.16	Minor modifications following feedback from PGR Board of Studies
1.0	27.07.16	Minor modifications to Sections 2.2.2; 3.3; 4.4; 4.5; 4.6; 8.1.1; and 9.2 following feedback from Management Committee
1.1	14.11.22	Minor edits to reflect changes to Target Audience. Updated reapproval date.