

Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study

Postgraduate Degree Programme Regulations

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Introduction

Compliance

1. The degree programme regulations define the types of award, their key characteristics, and their grounds for award. These regulations apply to all categories of postgraduate study at the University of Edinburgh, except for those qualified by a Senatus approved Memorandum of Agreement or Understanding for joint or collaborative awards. Students must comply with any requirements specific to their degree programme as set out in the Degree Programme Tables, the relevant College Regulations and the University's Assessment Regulations for the current academic session:

<https://registryservices.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/policies-regulations/regulations>

2. Every student must comply with the detailed requirements of the curriculum for the degree as set out in the appropriate Degree Programme Table, the programme handbook, the course handbook, the order in which courses are attended and the assessment for the programme, which are published in the University Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study. In exceptional cases, the Head of College (or delegated nominee) may approve a concession allowing a student to substitute a course marked as compulsory in the relevant Degree Programme Table with another course (or courses) with the same credit volume and SCQF level.

3. When selecting courses, students must comply with the pre-requisite, co-requisite and prohibited combination requirements for the Degree Programme, unless a concession is approved by the relevant College.

Authority Delegated to Colleges

4. Where the Head of College has the authority to grant permissions and concessions, this authority may be delegated to appropriate nominees in the College or Schools. Students must consult their Student Support Team, Supervisor, Student Adviser or School as to the appropriate point of contact, rather than approaching the College directly. Where the College does not have authority to award a particular concession then the Academic Policy and Regulations Committee may award the concession.

Code of Practice

5. The degree regulations are supported by the Code of Practice for Supervisors and Research Students, which provides essential information for staff and students:

<https://registryservices.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/students/code-of-practice>

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Fitness to Practise

6. Where a student's degree programme is subject to Fitness to Practise requirements, the relevant College Committee must be satisfied at all times that in respect of health, conduct and any other matters which the Committee may reasonably deem relevant, whether such matters relate to the student's University programme or are unrelated to it, the student will not constitute a risk to the public, vulnerable children or adults or to patients and is a suitable person to become a registered member of the relevant professional body. Students are subject to the Fitness to Practise regulations both while actively studying and while on an interruption of study. Any student who fails to satisfy the relevant College Committee, irrespective of their performance in assessment, will be reported to the Head of College who has power to recommend exclusion from further studies and assessments or Professional Examinations, or to recommend the award of the degree be withheld, or other penalty set out in College procedures. An appeal against this decision may be submitted to the University's Student Fitness to Practice Appeal Committee.

- See the Student Appeal Regulations at:
<https://uoesharepoint.com/:b:/s/PolicyRepository/EQ1BD5ywZRdMoYOVmNHwbDwBwe0daGZUqCT6j7AblafWtA>
- See the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences Fitness to Practice Procedure at: <https://www.ed.ac.uk/arts-humanities-soc-sci/taught-students/student-conduct/fitness-to-practise>
- See the College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine Fitness to Practice Procedure at: <https://medicine-vet-medicine.ed.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2025-07/College%20Student%20Fitness%20to%20Practise%20procedures-%202025.pdf>

Disclosure of Criminal Offences

7. The University considers that certain types of criminal offences may constitute a breach of the Code of Student Conduct and/or a degree programme's Fitness to Practise requirements. Accordingly, students must inform the Student Conduct Team (studentconduct@ed.ac.uk) if they have:

- a relevant pending charge or relevant unspent criminal conviction on matriculating at the University (students must provide this information no later than one week after matriculation); or
- been charged or convicted of a relevant criminal offence since matriculating at the University (students must provide this information no later than one week after the date of the charge or conviction).

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Information about offences considered relevant and which should therefore be reported under this regulation is provided on the University website, and may be updated on occasion:

<https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/students/conduct/criminalconvictions>

Where a student discloses a relevant charge or conviction, the Student Conduct Team will refer the case to the Deputy Secretary, Student Experience (or delegated authority), who will decide whether to:

- take no further action; or
- refer the matter for investigation under the Code of Student Conduct; or
- (where a student's degree programme is subject to Fitness to Practise requirements) refer the matter for consideration under the relevant College's Fitness to Practice procedures.

Alternatively, action may be taken under both the Code of Student Conduct and relevant Fitness to Practise procedures, where the Deputy Secretary (or delegated authority) and the relevant College consider this appropriate.

Postgraduate Awards and Degree Programmes

8. The University awards the following types of postgraduate degrees, diplomas and certificates. The University's postgraduate awards and degree programmes are consistent with the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF: <http://scqf.org.uk/>) unless an exemption has been approved by the Academic Policy and Regulations Committee, or the award is not included in the SCQF. The SCQF credit levels required for each programme are specified within the appropriate Degree Programme Table.

General Postgraduate Certificate Postgraduate Certificate in a named subject discipline	At least 60 credits of which a minimum of 40 should be at SCQF Level 11 or above
General Postgraduate Diploma Postgraduate Diploma in a named subject discipline	At least 120 credits of which a minimum of 90 should be at SCQF Level 11 or above
Masters in a named subject discipline Master of a named discipline	At least 180 credits of which a minimum of 150 are at SCQF Level 11
Masters in a named subject discipline Master of a named discipline (2 years full-time)	At least 240 credits of which a minimum of 150 are at SCQF Level 11

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MSc by research	At least 180 credits of which a minimum of 150 are at level 11. The research element will be worth a minimum of 120 credits of which a minimum of 60 must be attributable to the research project (for example, a portfolio of artefacts, artworks and other practice-based outputs) or dissertation.
MPhil	At least 240 credits of which a minimum of 150 are at SCQF Level 11
ChM	At least 120 credits at SCQF Level 12.
Doctorate	At least 540 credits of which a minimum of 420 are at SCQF Level 12
EngD	720 credits of which at least 540 are at SCQF Level 12. Of the remaining 180 credits 150 should be at SCQF Level 11 or above
PhD with Integrated Study	720 credits of which at least 540 are at SCQF Level 12. Of the remaining 180 credits 150 should be at SCQF Level 11 or above
MD,DDS,DVM&S* Doctor of a named discipline	*Note: these awards are not included in the SCQF therefore a credit value has not been included here

A General Postgraduate Degree Regulations

Late Admission

9. No student may commence a postgraduate degree, diploma or certificate programme more than two weeks after their given start date without the permission of the College. No student will be enrolled on a course more than two weeks after the start of the course without the permission of the Head of College. This includes students resuming courses following a period of authorised interruption of study. Students are not permitted to withdraw from a course marked as optional on the Degree Programme Table more than six weeks after the start of the relevant semester in order to substitute the course with another optional course, unless the relevant Board of Examiners has awarded a null sit for the course under the

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Exceptional Circumstances procedure, and the requirement above to enrol on the course within the first two weeks of the course can be met.

Part-time Study

10. Some postgraduate degree programmes may be pursued by part-time study on either a continuous or intermittent basis. Requirements for progression through individual programmes of study are shown in the relevant Degree Programme Table for taught postgraduate programmes and/or programme handbook for postgraduate taught and research programmes. Conditions for part-time study will be set out in the programme handbook.

Registration for University Staff

11. Members of the University staff may only be registered for part-time study. Exceptions may be approved by the College.

Conflicting Studies

12. Students registered on a programme of study at this University may not undertake any other concurrent credit bearing studies in this (or in any other) institution, unless the College has granted permission. The College must be satisfied that any additional credit-bearing studies will not restrict the student's ability to complete their existing programme of study. This regulation does not apply to visiting or non-graduating students.

Applicants Awaiting Results

13. Applicants for postgraduate study may be studying at this or another institution just prior to the start of their postgraduate studies. Such applicants must have finished these studies before the start of the programme to which they have an offer.

14. If successful completion of this prior study is a requirement of admission, applicants are expected to provide evidence of achievement before the start of the programme.

Consecutive Registration

15. At the time of application, MSc by Research applicants may be invited to be registered for consecutive MSc by Research, followed by PhD study within the same School. This option may not be available in all Schools. Depending on the outcome of assessment the student will be invited to follow one of three routes:

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- a. Start First Year of Doctoral Programme. If successful in the MSc by Research programme, the student graduates and also registers in the next academic session on the first year of the doctoral programme; or
- b. Start Second year of Doctoral Programme. Prior to the completion of the masters research project or dissertation, the School is content that the quality of the student's work merits treating the masters year as the first year of doctoral study. No research project or dissertation is submitted, no masters degree is awarded, and the student registers in the next academic session on the second year of the doctoral programme; or
- c. Graduate with MSc by Research Degree exit. If successful in the MSc by Research programme, the student graduates and does not continue on the doctoral programme.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

16. RPL can only be recognised at the point of admission to the University. The Head of College has the authority to recognise the transfer of a student's credit previously gained either at the University or another institution and to count it towards their intended award. Before approval is granted the College must be satisfied that the learning to be recognised and transferred provides an adequate current basis for the programme or courses as set out in the appropriate Degree Programme Table. The maximum number of credits that the Colleges will grant RPL for taught programmes is one-third of the total credits for the award for which the student is applying, that is 20 credits for a postgraduate certificate; 40 credits for a postgraduate diploma; and 60 credits for a masters (or 80 credits where a masters programme is comprised of 240 credits). For research programmes, the maximum number of RPL credits that the Colleges will grant is 360 credits. These restrictions do not apply to credit transferred when a student starts an associated Diploma or Masters, in line with regulation 60. Where a student has been awarded RPL on admission but is subsequently considered for a different exit award, a proportion of the credit previously-awarded for RPL may be removed in order to comply with the restriction that RPL constitute no more than one-third of the total credits for the award. The College may permit exceptions to this where the RPL was awarded for credit previously gained at the University, which did not lead to an award. Where a student has been awarded RPL for a course previously completed at the University which is on the Degree Programme Table for the programme they are being admitted to, the mark awarded for the course will be used for progression and award decisions relating to the new programme.

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17. University of Edinburgh courses which have a substantial curriculum overlap with any of the courses that contributed to RPL will not count towards the student's degree programme.

18. The University can also consider prior learning for admissions purposes.

[University RPL policy for admissions](#).

Permissible Credit Loads

19. Exceptionally, with College approval, students may take up to 20 credits of additional study at Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) levels 7-11 during each year of study.

20. Students may take courses on a class-only basis (i.e. not for credit), with the agreement of the course organiser, and the approval of the Director of Teaching or delegated nominee (e.g. Programme Director or Student Adviser), or supervisor. Decisions will be based on the overall load (credit and non-credit bearing) on the student in the year. Students may not take more than 40 additional credits in any year, except with the permission of the Head of College.

Credit Award

21. A student who has submitted work for one course or programme at the University must not submit the same work to attempt to achieve academic credit through another course or programme.

22. A student cannot, except under recognition of prior learning or application for associated postgraduate diploma or masters, or a formally approved collaborative programme of study, achieve an award comprising academic credit that contributed (or will contribute) to another award.

Transfer to Another Programme

23. A student may be allowed to transfer to a different degree programme from another within the University by permission of the receiving College. When such permission is granted, the student shall, in addition to satisfying the requirements for the degree to which transfer is made, pursue such further courses of study as the College may require. The College may approve the transfer of some or all of the credits the student has attained for their previous programme into the new programme, as appropriate. The time permitted to complete the programme onto which the student is to be transferred will be confirmed by the College, in consultation with the School.

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Attendance and Participation

24. Students must attend and participate as required in all aspects of their programme of study. This includes being available for teaching sessions, assessment, examination and meeting Student Adviser(s), Programme Directors or Cohort Leads or supervisors face-to-face and/or electronically. Except when registered on an online or distance learning programme, or where remote participation is specifically stated, students are expected to attend and participate in person, including during the period spent working on a dissertation or research project (with the exception of periods offered for resubmission of postgraduate taught dissertations or research projects, where in-person attendance may not be required – see the [Guidance on Resubmission of Postgraduate Taught Dissertations and Research Projects](#)). The Degree Programme Table and programme handbook sets out programme requirements for attendance and participation. Certain students' visa conditions may require the University to monitor attendance and participation in specific ways. Non-attendance and non-engagement may affect a student's visa sponsorship status.

25. It is a student's responsibility to provide a current postal contact address and to ensure that any legal requirements, including those imposed by their funding or grant authority, are met. All students are required to check their University email account frequently for communications from the University and respond where appropriate. See the University policy on Contacting Students by Email: www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/contacting_students_by_email.pdf

Study Period

26. A student must complete the requirements of the degree programme within the prescribed period of study, plus any permitted submission period, unless given a concession with the approval of the College.

See the Study Period Table:

[Study Period Table – Postgraduate Degree Regulations](#)

The Prescribed Period of Study

27. The University defines the prescribed period of study for each authorised programme. These are as stated in the study period table, unless the Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC) has approved a different prescribed period of study for the programme. The prescribed period of study for each programme is recorded in the offer of admission. See the Study Period Table:

[Study Period Table – Postgraduate Degree Regulations](#)

Reductions to the Prescribed Period of Study

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28. The College may reduce the prescribed period of study as indicated below:

- Postgraduate Certificate:
 - for **part-time continuous** students by up to 4 months.
 - for **part-time intermittent** by up to 12 months.
- Postgraduate Diploma:
 - for **part-time continuous** students by up to 8 months.
 - for **part-time intermittent** students by up to 24 months.
- Postgraduate Masters:
 - for **part-time continuous** students by up to 12 months.
 - for **part-time intermittent** students by up to 36 months.
- MPhil:
 - Members of the University staff and students holding a MPhil research appointment under the auspices of the University may be registered for a minimum period of 24 months part-time.
 - Members of staff of Associated Institutions who can devote the whole of their period of study to research and who have regular and adequate involvement in the work of the University School may also be registered for a minimum period of 24 months part-time.
 - Early submission on research degrees is covered in the Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees (18).
- Doctorate:
 - Members of the University staff and students holding a PhD research appointment under the auspices of the University may be registered for a minimum period of 36 months part-time.
 - Members of staff of Associated Institutions who can devote the whole of their period of study to research and who have regular and adequate involvement in the work of the University School may also be registered for a minimum period of 36 months part-time.
 - Early submission on research degrees is covered in the Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees (18).

See the Study Period Table:

[Study Period Table – Postgraduate Degree Regulations](#)

Submission Period

29. The submission period for doctoral and MPhil degrees begins three months prior to the end of the prescribed period of study. In addition, some research degree programmes permit students to have a submission period following the prescribed period of study. This is for a maximum of a year, for either full-time or part-time students. The MSc by Research does not have a submission period.

See the Study Period Table:

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[Study Period Table – Postgraduate Degree Regulations](#)

Leave of Absence

30. Leave of absence may be approved where a student's programme of study requires them to undertake compulsory or optional activities away from campus in Edinburgh. Leave of absence is not permitted for permanent study at a distance from Edinburgh.

Students must have the formal approval of the College for any leave of absence to study away from Edinburgh that is 30 calendar days' duration or longer. Study location changes of less than 30 calendar days must be agreed with the Supervisor or Director of Teaching or delegated nominee (e.g. Student Adviser). Where the activity is a compulsory part of the programme of study and is organised by the School or College, permission may be given by the College for a cohort of students without individual applications being made. Colleges and Schools must maintain records of all leaves of absence. Certain students' visa conditions may be affected by study away from Edinburgh. This regulation does not apply to students on online or distance learning programmes.

Withdrawal and Exclusion

31. Any student may withdraw from their programme of study at any point in the year. Students may be excluded for reasons outlined within the procedure for Withdrawal and Exclusion from Studies or due to termination of supervision as outlined in regulation 43:

[Withdrawal and Exclusion Procedure](#)

Collaborative Degrees

32. The University of Edinburgh and one or more partner universities can collaboratively offer an approved degree programme. This can be awarded jointly or dually. The University maintains a record of approved collaborative degrees.

Authorised Interruption of Study

33. Students may apply for an authorised interruption of study, in line with the Authorised Interruption of Study Policy.

[Authorised Interruption of Study Policy](#)

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The total permitted period of Authorised Interruption of Study is the same for full-time and part-time continuous students and will not exceed 100% of the prescribed period of full-time study, except in the following cases:

- On doctoral programmes, the total permitted period of Authorised Interruption of Study is 36 months, with the exception of PhD with Integrated Study programmes, for which the total permitted period of interruption is 48 months;
- For part-time intermittent students, the total permitted period of Authorised Interruption of Study is calculated as half of the prescribed period of study, for example, three years for a six-year Master's programme.
- On programmes with a prescribed period of full-time study of 9 months, the total permitted period of Authorised Interruption of Study is 12 months;
- On part-time continuous Masters programmes with a prescribed period of study of 36 months, the total permitted period of Authorised Interruption of study is 24 months.

The Head of College may exceptionally authorise an Interruption of Study which would take the total period of interruption beyond 100% of the prescribed period of study, provided this does not exceed the maximum allowable study period.

Also see the Study Period Table:

[Study Period Table – Postgraduate Degree Regulations](#)

Extensions of Study

34. In exceptional circumstances, a student may apply with the support of their supervisor or School postgraduate director to the College for an extension and it may be authorised by the College if there is good reason. Colleges may authorise individual extensions of up to 12 months. The total maximum period of permitted extensions is 24 months, provided this does not take the student past their maximum allowable study period. Additional periods of study offered for the completion of corrections or resubmission of a thesis under Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees (22, 23, or 24) do not count towards the total maximum period of permitted extensions.

See the Study Period Table:

[Study Period Table – Postgraduate Degree Regulations](#)

Maximum Degree Completion Periods

35. The maximum periods for completion of research degree programmes are the total of the prescribed period of study, any submission period, any interruptions of study, any extensions of study. The Study Period Table sets out maximum degree completion periods. See the Study Period Table:

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[Study Period Table – Postgraduate Degree Regulations](#)

Additional Regulations for Doctoral and MPhil Research Degrees

Supervision

36. Each student will work under the guidance of at least two supervisors appointed by the College. Supervision continues until the final version of the thesis is submitted. There are two types of supervisory arrangement: Principal Supervisor plus Assistant Supervisor (or supervisors if more than one); or Co-Supervisors, one of whom is designated the Lead Supervisor.

37. Schools are responsible for ensuring that all supervisors who are members of University staff (including honorary staff), have completed mandatory supervisor training at the University within the last five years. Schools are also responsible for ensuring that supervisors who are not University staff, or honorary University staff, for example staff at Associated Institutions, or at other higher education institutions, have either attended a supervisor briefing at the University within the last five years, or undertaken an equivalent training / briefing elsewhere within the same timescale.

38. The Principal/Lead Supervisor must be appointed prior to registration, and the other supervisor should be appointed within two months of the programme start date. Schools are responsible for recording supervisors on the student record.

39. The Principal/Lead Supervisor is responsible to the School's Postgraduate Director for the duties set out in the Code of Practice for Supervisors and Research Students, and must be:

- a) a member of staff of the University who has appropriate expertise in research and is not on a Guaranteed Hours or casual contract; or
- b) an honorary member of staff; or
- c) (when the student is studying full time in an Associated Institution) an employee of an Associated Institution.

40. Where the Principal/Lead Supervisor is an employee of an Associated Institution, the Assistant Supervisor(s) must be a University employee. A Principal/Lead Supervisor who is an employee of an Associated Institution has exactly the same responsibilities as one working within the University.

41. Students, including those on leave of absence, must maintain frequent contact with their supervisor as and when required and at least twice in each three

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month period. Students attending the University on Student visas may be required to make more frequent contact with their supervisor according to the terms of their visa. Students should contact the Student Immigration Service for advice about this. Immigration information for staff working with non-UK students (EASE login required): <https://www.edweb.ed.ac.uk/student-administration/immigration/tier-4-staff>

Changes to supervision

42. In order to ensure that postgraduate research students are provided with appropriate supervision for the duration of their programme, it may be necessary on occasion to make changes to supervisory arrangements. The College is responsible for decisions on changes to supervisory arrangements and for notifying students of any changes to their supervisory arrangements at the earliest opportunity. The College reserves the right to:

- make variations to supervisory arrangements; and / or
- alter the approach to methods of delivery of supervision.

If the Principal/Lead Supervisor is absent for more than six consecutive weeks, the College will ensure alternative arrangements are in place.

Termination of supervision

43. In the event that the College considers that it is necessary to make changes to supervisory arrangements, and the College has not been able to provide alternative supervision despite having undertaken reasonable endeavours, the College may request that the Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee consider terminating supervision of the student as set out in the procedure for termination of supervision of Postgraduate Research students:

https://www.ed.ac.uk/sites/default/files/atoms/files/procedure_for_termination_of_supervision.pdf

Transfers from Another Institution

44. The research studies of students who apply to transfer from another institution in order to study for a doctoral or MPhil degree of the University of Edinburgh may be counted towards the prescribed period of study for the degree. In such cases the prescribed period of study at the University of Edinburgh must be at least 12 months.

Request for Reinstatement on Doctoral and MPhil degrees

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45. A student who has been excluded for lapse of time, debt, non-matriculation, or lack of visa permission, or who has withdrawn voluntarily before the end of their period of study may ask the College to reinstate their registration at a later date to allow them to complete their programme. The College will decide whether or not a student should be reinstated, and factors such as (but not limited to) the passage of time and its implications for the topic of study and the availability of appropriate supervision will be taken into account. The student must provide good reason for the previous failure to complete. Students who require Student Visa sponsorship must contact the Student Immigration Service for advice before applying for reinstatement. If reinstatement is approved:

- Students who were previously excluded for lapse of time will be reinstated for a period of one month and required to submit their thesis for examination, in accordance with the Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees. Where a student does not submit their thesis for examination within the period of reinstatement, they will be excluded for lapse of time and will not be permitted to apply for further reinstatement.
- Students who previously withdrew before the end of their submission period, or were excluded due to debt, non-matriculation, or lack of visa permission, will be offered the time they had remaining on their programme to complete the thesis before submission. Students may apply for extension to study or interruption of study as normal. Their thesis once submitted will be examined in accordance with the Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees.

The Withdrawal and Exclusion Procedure provides more information about where students may or may not be permitted to apply for reinstatement following exclusion.

[Withdrawal and Exclusion Procedure](#)

Vacation Leave for Research Students

46. Research Students are entitled to a maximum of eight weeks' vacation leave (i.e. 40 working days including public holidays) in each year of their programme without applying for an interruption of study. This includes MSc by Research students on programmes which are examined by the relevant College Postgraduate Committee (see Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees 46). MSc by Research degrees which are examined by a Board of Examiners in a School include vacation periods at specific points in the calendar.

Time taken as vacation leave is included within the prescribed period of study. Students must seek approval for vacation leave from their supervisor and the School

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Postgraduate Office. Visa restrictions may also apply in the case of international students.

Grounds for the Award of Doctoral and MPhil Research Degrees

Demonstration by Thesis and Oral Exam for the Award of PhD

47. The student must demonstrate by the presentation of a thesis and/or portfolio, and by performance at an oral examination:

- capability of pursuing original research making a significant contribution to knowledge or understanding in the field of study;
- adequate knowledge of the field of study and relevant literature;
- exercise of critical judgement with regard to both the student's work and that of other scholars in the same general field, relating particular research projects to the general body of knowledge in the field; and
- the ability to present the results of the research in a critical and scholarly way.

The thesis must:

- represent a coherent body of work; and
- contain a significant amount of material worthy of publication or public presentation.

PhD Thesis Length - Word Count

48. The thesis must not exceed a maximum word count of 100,000. There is no minimum word count. The word count of the thesis includes the main text, preface material (e.g. table of contents, acknowledgements, list of abbreviations, list of illustrations), footnotes and references but does not include material in the appendices, bibliography, image captions, abstract or lay summary. In exceptional circumstances, on the recommendation of the supervisor, permission may be granted by the College to exceed the stated length on the ground that such extension is required for adequate treatment of the thesis topic.

Additional Doctoral Programme Considerations

49. Some doctoral programmes will have additional entrance, curriculum and examination requirements. Information is provided in relevant Degree Programme Tables and programme handbooks. Students must successfully complete all additional requirements to be awarded the degree.

MPhil by Research

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50. The student must demonstrate by the presentation of a thesis and/or portfolio and by performance at an oral examination:

- capability of pursuing original research making a contribution to knowledge or understanding in the field of study;
- adequate knowledge of the field of study and relevant literature;
- exercise of critical judgement with regard to both the student's work and that of other scholars in the same general field, relating particular research projects to the general body of knowledge in the field; and
- the ability to present the results of the research in a critical and scholarly way.

The thesis must:

- represent a coherent body of work, and
- contain material worthy of publication or public presentation.

51. The thesis must not exceed a maximum of 60,000 words. There is no minimum word count. The word count of the thesis includes the main text, preface material, footnotes and references but does not include material in the appendices, bibliography, image captions, abstract or lay summary. In exceptional circumstances, on the recommendation of the supervisor, permission may be granted by the College to exceed the stated length on the ground that such extension is required for adequate treatment of the thesis topic.

PhD (by Research Publications)

52. Applicants must be either graduates of the University of Edinburgh of at least five years' standing; or members of staff of the University of Edinburgh (including Honorary staff) or of an Associated Institution of not less than three years' standing. Permission to register will not be granted to applicants who are in a position to submit a PhD thesis for examination or who already possess a doctoral degree. Applicants must have been active postgraduate researchers in their field of expertise for a minimum of five years, and they must not submit material published more than ten years prior to the date of registration for the degree.

53. Applicants must apply to the relevant College for approval of their candidature. Applicants are required to submit a list of their published or creative work, together with a statement (including the theme and summary of the work) and their CV. If the College approves registration, it will appoint an adviser to assist the applicant with the format of their submission and to guide them on the selection, coherence and quality of the portfolio of research work, the abstract and critical review.

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54. In order to qualify for the award of PhD (by Research Publications) the applicant must demonstrate by the presentation of a portfolio of published or publicly exhibited creative works and by performance at an oral examination:

- capability of pursuing original research making a significant contribution to knowledge or understanding in the field of study;
- adequate knowledge of the field of study and relevant literature;
- exercise of critical judgement with regard to both the student's work and that of other scholars in the same general field, relating particular research projects to the general body of knowledge in the field; and
- the ability to present the results of the research in a critical and scholarly way.

The portfolio submitted for the PhD by Research Publications must present a coherent and substantial body of work, which would have taken the equivalent of three years of full-time study to complete.

55. Students must submit their portfolio within 12 months of registration for the degree. The submission for assessment will include: the portfolio of published work or publicly exhibited creative work; an abstract; and a critical review of all their submitted work. The portfolio must consist of either one or two books or creative works, or at least six refereed journal articles or research papers, which are already in the public domain. The total submission, including the critical review should not exceed 100,000 words.

- The critical review must summarise the aims, objectives, methodology, results and conclusions covered by the work submitted in the portfolio. It must also critically assess how the work contributes significantly to the expansion of knowledge, indicate how the publications form a coherent body of work and what contribution the student has made to this work. The critical review must be at least 10,000 words, but not more than 25,000 words in length. Where the portfolio consists of creative works, the critical review should be close to, but not exceed, the maximum word length.
- Students must either be the sole author of the portfolio or must be able to demonstrate in the critical review of the submitted work that they have made a major contribution to all of the work that has been produced by more than one author.

Additional Regulations for Postgraduate Taught Degrees and MSc by Research, Postgraduate Diplomas and Postgraduate Certificates

Programme-Specific Regulations

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56. These regulations may be supplemented by certain programme-specific regulations for degrees offered in collaboration with other institutions.

Period of Study

57. The prescribed period of study is defined in the Degree Programme Table. This period may not be reduced, and may be extended only in exceptional circumstances.

Assessment

58. Students must comply with any assessment requirements specific to their degree programme and the University's taught or research (as appropriate) assessment regulations for the current academic session:

<https://registryservices.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/policies-regulations/regulations>

MSc by Research Degrees only

59. In addition to any requirements as detailed in the relevant Degree Programme Table, the student must present:

- a research project or dissertation; or
- a critical survey of knowledge in the field of study, combined with a satisfactory plan for a more advanced research project.

The research must demonstrate competence, knowledge and be presented in a critical and scholarly way. The assessed work, including the research project or dissertation must not exceed 30,000 words. The word count includes the main text, preface material, footnotes and references but does not include material in the appendices, bibliography, or abstract.

Application for Associated Postgraduate Diploma or Masters

60. A candidate who already holds a Postgraduate Certificate or Diploma from the University of Edinburgh may be permitted by the appropriate College to apply for candidature for the associated Postgraduate Diploma or Masters degree, provided that not more than five years have elapsed between their first graduation and acceptance as a candidate for the subsequent award. Marks awarded for courses taken previously as part of the certificate or diploma will be used in progression and award decisions relating to the new programme. Credit for courses taken previously which form part of the Degree Programme Table for the new programme does not

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count against the credit allowance for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL). Candidates who have exited the University with a Postgraduate Certificate or Diploma due to failure to meet relevant progression requirements for the associated award for which they are applying are not eligible to apply for readmission on this basis.

Posthumous Awards

61. Senatus may authorise the conferment of posthumous degrees, diplomas and certificates if proposed by the College and approved by the Academic Policy and Regulations Committee. A posthumous award is conferred where the student has significantly completed the relevant year of study at the time of death.

Aegrotat Awards

62. In exceptional circumstances, Senatus may authorise the conferment of *aegrotat* degrees to postgraduate students. Each such conferment requires a proposal from the relevant College to be approved by the Academic Policy and Regulations Committee. An *aegrotat* degree is conferred only where the student was nearly qualified to receive the degree and was unable to complete it due to circumstances beyond their control. Before any proposal is referred to Senatus, the College must check that the student is willing to receive the degree *aegrotat*.

B College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences Postgraduate Degree Regulations: Degree Specific Regulations

Doctor of Clinical Psychology (DClinPsychol)

63. The degree specific regulations are:
- Grounds for Award.** Awarded on successful completion of supervised clinical practice, written examination, assessed essay and research portfolio, including thesis, small-scale research projects and experimental case reports.
 - Mode of Study and Prescribed Period of Study.** The programme can be taken on a full-time or mixed full-time/part-time basis, but the first year is taken on a full-time basis only. The prescribed period of study is 36 months full-time, or between 48 and 60 months on a mixed full-time/part-time basis.
 - Thesis Length.** The thesis must not exceed 30,000 words unless, in exceptional cases, the College has given permission for a longer thesis.

Doctor of Psychotherapy and Counselling (DPsychotherapy)

64. The degree specific regulations are:

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- a. **Placement.** Students will undertake a practice placement, consisting of 300 hours of supervised counselling practice and 60 hours of counselling supervision.
- b. **Thesis Length.** The thesis will be between 35,000 and 55,000 words in length unless in exceptional cases the College has given permission for a longer thesis.
- c. **Prescribed period.** The prescribed period of study for students undertaking the programme on a full-time basis is 48 months, and for students undertaking the programme on a part-time basis is 84 months.
- d. **Resits.** A student who fails the practice placement may, on the recommendation of the Board of Examiners, be offered a second opportunity to undertake the placement if in the opinion of the Board the failure was attributable to illness, hardship or other relevant circumstances beyond the student's control. A repeat placement is to be completed within a further 24 months.
- e. **Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).** In the case of formal, certificated study, up to 60 credits of prior learning at Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) level 11 may be recognised. In the case of non-certificated study, up to 20 credits of prior learning may be recognised.

PhD in Musical Composition

65. **Grounds for Award.** The student must compose to a high creative level as demonstrated both by the student presenting a portfolio of compositions as well as attendance at an oral examination. The portfolio of compositions must comprise original work which:

- a. is suitable for professional performance and worthy of publication;
- b. shows competence in the ancillary technical skills appropriate to the chosen style;
- c. contains material which presents a body of work such as could reasonably be achieved on the basis of three years postgraduate study;
- d. is presentationally satisfactory and intelligible to any musician who might have to use it.

66. The portfolio of compositions should include at least one major and extended work, except where a shorter submission may be accepted in the case of electronic compositions. If a substantial part of the portfolio was completed before registration for the degree, the student should indicate this and identify the part of the portfolio so completed.

PhD- Submission by Portfolio in Art, Design and Landscape Architecture

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67. The degree specific regulations, when a student is submitting for award of PhD by means of a portfolio of artefacts, artworks and other practice-based outputs, are:

- a. The portfolio of artefacts or artworks must comprise original work of a high creative level which is worthy of public exhibition and also an integral part of the contribution to knowledge made by the overall work of the candidate submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of the PhD. It must show competence in the appropriate ancillary technical skills; must contain material which presents a body of work such as could reasonably be achieved on the basis of three years postgraduate study; must be satisfactory and intelligible in its presentation. There should also be a permanent record of the work (e.g. video, photographs, recordings, sketches, studies, web pages); and
- b. The portfolio of artefacts and artworks will be accompanied by a thesis of not more than 50,000 words (refer to Regulation 48 for items included or excluded from the word count).
- c. Where specified in programme descriptors (e.g. for PhD by Practice in Art or Design) the portfolio should be submitted separately to the written thesis.

MPhil - Submission by Portfolio in Art, Design and Landscape Architecture

68. The degree specific regulations, when a student is submitting for award of MPhil by means of a portfolio of artefacts, artworks and other practice-based outputs, are:

- a. The portfolio of artefacts or artworks must comprise original work of a high creative level worthy of public exhibition. It must show competence in the appropriate ancillary technical skills; must contain material which presents a body of work such as could reasonably be achieved on the basis of two years postgraduate study; must be satisfactory and intelligible in its presentation. There should also be a permanent record of the work (e.g. video, photographs, recordings, sketches, studies, web pages); and
- b. The portfolio of artefacts or artworks should normally be accompanied by a thesis of not more than 30,000 words (refer to Regulation 51 for items included or excluded from the word count).

Master of Fine Art

69. The Master of Fine Art is gained upon the successful completion of 240 Credits of study. A maximum of 30 credits can be taken below Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) Level 11. The degree specific regulations are:

- a. **Grounds for Award.** Students will be assessed by a combination of practical studio work with theoretical and written studies, including professional practice elements.

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- b. **Prescribed Period of Study.** The period of study will be 21 months full-time.

Master of Social Work/Diploma in Social Work (MSW/DipSW)

- 70. The degree specific regulations are:
 - a. **Grounds for Award.** Students will undertake two practice placements
 - b. **Prescribed Period of Study.** The period of study will be 21 months full-time.
 - c. **Re-Sit Options.** A student who fails a unit of academic assessment other than the dissertation on the first occasion may be allowed one further attempt to complete the assessment requirements. A student who fails a practice placement may, on the recommendation of the Board of Examiners, be offered a second opportunity to undertake the placement.

Diploma in Educational Leadership and Management/Scottish Qualification for Headship Programme

- 71. The degree specific regulations are:
 - a. **Grounds for Award.** Students will be assessed on each course through coursework (assignments, portfolios, reports and oral assessments) and through school visits by SQH field assessors in the case of course 5. In accordance with the national agreement all courses are assessed only on a pass/fail basis. Students who fail a course will be permitted one further attempt to pass the assessment of that course within six weeks of the result being made known to the student.
 - b. **Mode of Study and Prescribed Period of Study.** The programme is available by part-time study only, and the period of study is between 27 and 60 months.

Master of Counselling/Diploma in Counselling (MCouns/DipCouns)

- 72. The degree specific regulations are:
 - a. **Grounds for Award.** Students will undertake a practice placement, consisting of at least 150 hours of supervised counselling practice and 30 hours of counselling supervision.
 - b. **Mode of Study and Prescribed Period of Study.** The period of study will be 24 months full time or 48 months part-time. Each student must complete the requirements of the degree before the expiry of a further 12 months.
 - c. **Re-Sits.** Students who fail a unit of academic assessment other than the dissertation on the first occasion may be allowed one further attempt to complete the assessment. A student who fails the practice placement may, on the recommendation of the Board of Examiners, be offered a second opportunity to undertake the placement. A repeat placement must be completed within a further 24 months.

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MSc in Transformative Learning and Teaching

73. The degree specific regulations are:
- a. **Prescribed period.** The prescribed period of study for students undertaking the programme is 21 months.
 - b. **Assessment.** As part of the assessment of the programme, students are required to submit a portfolio of work and undertake a professional viva to provide evidence that they have met the GTCS Standard for Provisional Registration. The portfolio and professional viva comprise one 30 credit assessment.

PhD in Creative Music Practice

74. **Grounds for Award.** The degree is assessed on a single output that consists of two components:
- a. A text of not more than 50,000 words (refer to Regulation 48 for items included or excluded from the word count); and
 - b. A portfolio, performance(s), recording(s), and/or other musical output containing original or interpreted pre-existing works such as composition, installation, sound design, interactive music software etc. Such work would be supported by documentation of the process (e.g. video, photographs, recordings, sketches, studies, web pages) by which it was made.

PhD in Trans-Disciplinary Documentary Film

75. **Grounds for Award.** There are three possible variations for final submission, which combine the submission of audio-visual material and a thesis:
- a. audio-visual material to a maximum of 1 hour documentary film or 100 photographs, plus an extended critical essay of 25,000 - 30,000 words; or
 - b. audio-visual material to a maximum of 40 minutes documentary film or 70 photographs, plus an extended critical essay of 45,000 - 50,000 words; or
 - c. audio-visual material to a maximum of 20 minutes documentary film or 40 photographs, plus an extended critical essay of 65,000 - 70,000 words.

PhD in Architecture by Design

76. The submission for the PhD in Architecture by Design should include:
- a. A text of not more than 50,000 words (refer to regulation 48 for items included or excluded from the word count); and
 - b. a body of design work, fully integrated with the text and presented in a format which can be archived. The design work should comprise original work of a high creative level worthy of public exhibition and form an integral part of the contribution to knowledge made by the overall work of the candidate

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submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of the PhD. It must show competence in the appropriate ancillary technical skills, and the use of design-research methods appropriate to the thesis. This may include a record of the work in development (e.g. video, photographs, recordings, sketches, studies) and should include a record of temporary events or exhibitions relevant to the completed thesis.

Master of Architecture

77. **Grounds for Award.** The programme will be delivered by a series of advanced level design exercises and projects, engaging with structural, environmental, cultural, theoretical and aesthetic questions. Students must pass the Academic Portfolio for exemption from ARB/RIBA Part 2.

Diploma in Professional Legal Practice

78. The degree specific regulations are:

- a. **Grounds for Award.** Students must pass all of the core courses and three elective courses to be awarded the Diploma in Professional Legal Practice. The pass mark for courses on the Diploma is 50%.
- b. **Assessment Type.** Students will be assessed in writing in each course of the curriculum. Where the assessment for a course includes an examination, students may only present themselves for examination in a course if they have been certified as having given regular attendance and having successfully completed the requisite work of the class in that course. Students may be permitted two re-sit assessments or examinations for each course of the curriculum in which they have failed.

PhD in Creative Writing

79. Grounds for award. The programme is assessed via a portfolio of writing which should include:

- a. A substantial piece or pieces of creative work of no more than 75,000 words of creative prose; or 75 page of verse; or a dramatic composition of no more than three hours length and
- b. An extended critical essay of no more than 25,000 words reflecting on the work's aims and context(s).

The balance between creative and critical elements should be 75% Creative, 25% Critical.

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C College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine Postgraduate Degree Regulations: Degree Specific Regulations

Doctor of Medicine (MD)

80. The grounds for the award of the degree of MD are consistent with the award of MPhil by Research degrees.

81. Supervisors must accommodate the student and the project within their research facilities, and obtain permission from line managers as required. Supervisors will be located in the University of Edinburgh or in NHS facilities within the supervision of the NHS Education for Scotland South East Scotland* postgraduate deanery.

82. Registration may be full-time or part-time.

- a. Full-time registration will apply to students who will spend >80% full-time equivalent devoted to research related to the MD project. They may be either not in employment for >20% full-time equivalent, or employed in a post in which at least 80% full time equivalent time is available for research related to their MD project rather than for clinical training or practice or other duties. Full time students have a prescribed period of two years in which they will conduct the research with up to two years to write up the thesis thereafter. Thesis submission is permitted at two years at the earliest and within four years.
- b. Part-time registration will apply to students who are in employment unrelated to their MD project for >20% full-time equivalent, or who elect not to devote as much as 80% of their time to the MD research project. Students may opt to study either at 40% full-time equivalent, for which they will have a prescribed period of research of four years, or at 60% equivalent, for which the prescribed period is 3 years. Students will have two years to write up the thesis at the end of the prescribed period. Thesis submission is permitted at the end of the prescribed period of study at the earliest.

MD Timetable for submission

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
MD full time	Prescribed Period		submission period			
MD part time 60%	Prescribed Period			submission period		
MD part time 40%	Prescribed Period				submission period	

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Doctor of Veterinary Medicine and Surgery (DVM&S)

83. A thesis for the degree of DVM&S must deal with one or more of the subjects of study in the curriculum for the degree of BVM&S of the University or with subjects arising directly from contemporary veterinary practice.

84. The grounds for the award of the degree of DVM&S are:

- a. the student must have demonstrated by the presentation of a thesis and by performance in an oral examination (unless this is exceptionally waived by College) that the student is capable of pursuing original research in the field of study relating particular researches to the general body of knowledge in the field, and presenting the results of the researches in a critical and scholarly way.
- b. the thesis must be an original work making a significant contribution to knowledge in or understanding of the field of study; contain material worthy of publication; show a comprehensive knowledge and a critical appreciation of the field of study and related literature; show that the student's observations have been carefully made; show the exercise of independent critical judgement with regard to both the student's work and that of other scholars in the same general field; contain material which presents a unified body of work; be satisfactory in its literary and general presentation, give full and adequate references and have a coherent structure understandable to a scholar in the same general field with regard to intentions, background, methods and conclusions.

85. Registration is five years part-time. An intending student shall submit to the College a suggested topic and description of the work on which the thesis will be based. A registration fee is paid upon initial registration, an annual advisory fee is paid at the beginning of each year of study (including the first year) and an examination fee is paid at the time of thesis submission. After formal acceptance of the suggested topic and description, a period of normally at least 18 months must elapse before the thesis is submitted.

86. The thesis length should be no longer than 60,000 words.

Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVetMed)

87. DVetMed students will undertake courses to obtain 180 credits in each year of the four year programme. In order to qualify for the award of Doctor of Veterinary Medicine, students must obtain a total of 720 credits across the duration of the programme, in accordance with the progression requirements below.

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88. Students are permitted one re-sit attempt for each SCQF Level 12 course on the programme. Students may be awarded credit on aggregate for up to 60 credits of SCQF Level 11 courses in each year, provided they meet the following criteria:

- Achieve a mark of 50% or more in 120 credits worth of courses (at the first or second attempt for SCQF Level 12 courses);
- Achieve an average of 50% or more across 180 credits of courses (based on performance at the first or second attempt for SCQF Level 12 courses).

89. Exit awards are available to students leaving the programme without qualifying for award of the DVetMed.

Based on the criteria set out in the Taught Assessment Regulations relating to Postgraduate degree, diploma and certificate award, the following will be awarded:

- PGCert (VetMed) upon completion of 60 credits of courses
- PGDip (VetMed) upon completion of 120 credits of courses

In order to qualify for the award of MSc (VetMed), students must meet the following criteria:

- Achieve a pass in 180 credits of courses;
- Achieve an average of 50% across 180 credits of courses based on performance at the first attempt in each course;
- Achieve a mark of at least 50% in a minimum of 120 credits of courses, including at least 50 credits of specified research courses*, based on performance at the first attempt in each course.

*Contributing research courses are listed in the relevant DPT/Programme Handbook.

D College of Science and Engineering Postgraduate Degree Regulations: Degree Specific Regulations

Doctor of Engineering (EngD)

90. The Prescribed Period of Study is 48 months full-time and 96 months part-time.

MSc Engineering degrees: professional requirements

91. An MSc student who is eligible for progression or for the award of an accredited MSc degree by the University regulations but who fails an MSc course, for which a

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pass is required for reasons associated with breadth of professional knowledge and/or the stipulation(s) of one or more of the Professional Accreditation bodies, will be required to “resit for professional purposes” the failed course.

92. A student requiring “resit(s) for professional purposes” will be ineligible for the accredited MSc degree unless the necessary passes at “resit for professional purposes” are achieved, but may be eligible for the award of the unaccredited degree of MSc in Engineering Technology in a Designated Subject.

93. ‘Resits for professional purposes’ should be taken at the next available opportunity. Only one resit attempt will be permitted. Where a student has exhausted the maximum number of attempts and has still yet to pass a course or courses, they will not be eligible for the accredited MSc degree, but will be considered for an exit award in line with Regulation 111.

94. Where resits for professional purposes are required, the first (fail) mark will be recorded for the MSc degree classification.

95. It will be for each MSc Programme Director within the School of Engineering to identify the requirements for each degree programme. This may be done on the basis of individual courses, and/or on the basis of an aggregate. The requirements for each Programme will be stated in the Degree Programme Handbook.