

Research Degrees: Guidance notes series

#10. PHD BY PRIOR PUBLICATION

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Related documents

Policy 2R: Regulations for Postgraduate Research Students
<http://portal.solent.ac.uk/documents/academic-services/academic-handbook/section-2/2r---regulations-for-pgr-students.pdf?t=1534525946909>

Academic Handbook 2L: Student Academic Misconduct Policy
<http://portal.solent.ac.uk/documents/academic-services/academic-handbook/section-2/2l-student-academic-misconduct.pdf?t=1535126909597>

Fees table 2018-19
<http://portal.solent.ac.uk/documents/academic-services/compliance/fees-table-2018-19-compliance-5.12.17.pdf>

Fee and payment regulations: Home, EU, EEA and Island students - 2018-19
<http://portal.solent.ac.uk/documents/academic-services/compliance/2018-19-fees-regulations-for-home-eu-and-island-students-compliance-5.12.17.pdf>

RD6E and RD7DEC forms available online

Further reading

Tuition fees and funding
<https://www.solent.ac.uk/finance/tuition-fees>

How to apply
<https://www.solent.ac.uk/research/research-degrees/how-to-apply>

General Information for doctoral students
<https://www.solent.ac.uk/research/research-degrees/studying-research-degree>

International support at Solent University
<https://www.solent.ac.uk/international/international-students>

Intellectual Property Rights at Solent University
<http://portal.solent.ac.uk/documents/academic-services/policies-procedures-guidelines/intellectual-property-rights-policy.pdf?t=1534437839680>

Solent Researchers library guide on Reference Management
<https://libguides.solent.ac.uk/c.php?g=657980&p=4665038>

DOCTORAL STUDENT ADMINISTRATION

How to contact Doctoral Student Administration

1. research.admissions@solent.ac.uk: Applicants should direct all enquiries and correspondence here until they have completed enrolment.
2. research.degree@solent.ac.uk: Registered students should direct all enquiries and correspondence here after completing enrolment.

INTRODUCTION

3. This guidance provides potential applicants, students, and staff involved with the application and programme of study with details of the arrangements for the award of PhD by Prior Publication and should be read in conjunction with the University's Regulations for Postgraduate Research Students (Academic Handbook, 2R).
4. The PhD by Prior Publication allows people who have not followed the traditional academic route towards a PhD to obtain academic recognition for having undertaken and produced research, and developed their research skills and subject knowledge to a doctoral level. This may include people entering higher education in mid-career, especially in practice-based disciplines.
5. The PhD by Prior Publication differs from the 'traditional' PhD in that it is based upon research already undertaken before registration for the degree that has led to a number of coherent publications or a body of publicly available non-textual/creative outputs. 'Traditional' PhD students undertake training in research methodology and research practice as part of their programme of study, while the PhD by Prior Publication student will have undertaken this training and academic development prior to coming to Solent or have developed these skills alongside their professional role at Solent and have demonstrated these through their research publications/outputs. The research skills obtained are therefore recognised and evaluated in retrospect and would be expected to be at the level equivalent of a 'traditional' PhD route at the 'writing-up' stage at the point of admission to the PhD by Prior Publication.

General information

6. Only applications which are complete by one of the two published annual application deadlines will be considered for registration at the next entry date. Annually there are two entry dates (October and January). Applications which are incomplete at the application deadline may be considered for the next available entry point once they are completed.
7. Applicants may defer entry once accepted to the next entry point (October or January). Applicants may defer for 12 months, but must do this in the knowledge that the University may not be in a position to offer a place to study at a later stage, or may amend the previously proposed supervision arrangements.
8. A key part of the application review process is to determine whether the University is able to offer appropriate supervisory expertise. The non-availability of expert supervision is an acceptable reason for rejecting an application, however eligible the applicant is in other respects.

9. The University does not accept applications to present a thesis in a language other than English.

PHD BY PRIOR PUBLICATION ELIGIBILITY

The application

10. Applications are made online using the same process as that for the 'traditional' PhD except as outlined below (*see Guidance note #3* and the [Research Degrees admissions page](#))
11. The applicant should, following their application, submit for consideration at the *prima facie* stage no less than four and no more than six substantial published works (published texts or outputs) published within the past five years, which together comprise in quantity and quality the greater part of the word length of a PhD as outlined in *Guidance note #7* and which must be in the public domain prior to registration on the award.
 - Examples of materials acceptable for publication submission are
 - i. Refereed articles in journal
 - ii. Monographs
 - iii. Chapters in books
 - iv. Chapters in conference proceedings with an ISSN
 - v. Books
12. The degree will be awarded on the basis of the materials and submitted publications as described below and defined and formally recognised by the appropriate subject and disciplinary area.
13. In the event of any issues arising regarding the eligibility, the proposal should be referred initially to the Doctoral Hub Scrutiny Panel.

Entry criteria: Prima facie stage

14. The award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy by Prior Publication shall be open to applicants who are members of Solent University staff who have completed their probationary period of employment and who can demonstrate a record of publication or other public outputs of research of appropriate quantity and quality and who do not already hold a doctoral degree in the same or cognate discipline or area of research.
15. The body of research outputs must:
 - a) Demonstrate a quantity, quality and level of research equivalent to that of a 'traditional' PhD student who has reached the beginning of the 'writing-up' stage
 - b) Be at least equal to the length of a standard PhD thesis (*see Guidance note #7*)
 - c) Provide evidence of the acquisition and utilisation of research skills equivalent to those of a 'traditional' PhD student who has reached the end of the 'writing-up' stage
16. The degree will be awarded on the basis of the materials and submitted publications as described below and defined and formally recognised by the appropriate subject and disciplinary area.
17. Prior to registering for a PhD by Prior Publication, applicants will be required to undergo a preliminary evaluation. This initial *prima facie* stage will accompany the interview

element of admission, with the objective of enabling the University to make a preliminary judgement as to the quality and coherence of the publications that form the basis of the application, the likelihood of a submission which will meet the criteria for an award, and the ability of the relevant research area within the University to provide appropriate supervision and resources.

18. The *prima facie* evaluation will be undertaken by the PGR Coordinator or a nominated representative and a senior academic from a field relevant to the proposal. The evaluation may result in one of the following outcomes:

- That there is a *prima facie* case for admission to the degree of PhD
- That there is no *prima facie* case for admission to the degree of PhD at this stage but the applicant should consider making a new application after further publication or revisions have been made
- That there is no *prima facie* case for admission to the degree of PhD

19. By recommending that there is a *prima facie* case for admission, the panel are confirming that there is evidence that the applicant:

- meets the entry criteria
- has a substantial body of work and skills that can be considered to be the equivalent of a 'traditional' PhD at the beginning of the writing-up process
- is likely to meet the required standard for a PhD
- includes evidence of a unifying theme across the publications
- includes evidence of originality
- includes evidence of research skills equivalent to those expected of a traditional PhD student in the relevant discipline
- has proposed a suitable PhD title
- that there is a suitable supervisor available

20. In the event of any issues arising regarding the eligibility, the proposal should be referred initially to the Doctoral Hub Scrutiny Panel.

21. Following the *prima facie* and interview element of the admission process the PGR Coordinator will make arrangements to confirm the supervisory provision.

REGISTRATION

22. Applicants accepting an offer to submit for a PhD by Prior Publication must follow the registration and induction process outlined in *Guidance note #3*.

23. Students registered for the PhD by Prior Publication will not be required to undertake the Project Approval or Transfer milestones of the 'traditional' PhD but will be expected to engage in the Annual Monitoring processes outlined in *Guidance note #6*.

24. Registration for PhD by Prior Publication will be on a part-time basis only and will be subject of a minimum registration period of 6 months with an expected submission within 12 months of registration (*See Academic Handbook 2R: Regulations for Postgraduate Research Students*).

25. No less than two months' notice of intention to submit for examination should be given using the RD6E form (*See guidance note #7*).

Tuition fees

26. The PhD by Prior Publication shall be subject to the University's reduced annual 'writing-up' fee. Staff seeking the fee from their School must undertake to obtain authorisation from the Dean of the relevant School and submit the form to the income team prior to attempting to register.
27. Candidates for the PhD by Prior Publication who do not submit within the 12 months registration period will be liable for the full annual part-time fee during any period of approved extension.

THE ROLE OF THE SUPERVISOR

Scrutiny panel

28. The nominated Director of Studies (DoS) will act in a similar role to that of a supervisor of a standard PhD project, but with more emphasis on being a mentor to the student. They will act as a source of support and guidance during the preparation of the research material for examination and for administration of the annual monitoring, examination and other internal processes.
29. The DoS will be a permanent member of staff with experience of supervising at least one doctoral student to successful completion, or part of a supervisory team that includes a member of staff with a completion at doctoral level.
30. The DoS will:
 - Guide the student in the final selection of publications for inclusion in the submission;
 - Support and advise on the development of the framing document / introductory section;
 - Guide the candidate in relation to the coherence of the body of work to be submitted;
 - Advise the candidate in relation to any research training requirement, for example sessions available through the Researcher Development Programme on preparing for the viva
 - Make arrangements for the examination, including nomination of the examination panel, in discussion with the student; and
 - Support the student through the examination process.

REQUIREMENTS OF THE DEGREE

The form of the examination

31. The award consists of two parts
 - i. A substantial published work (published texts or outputs)
 - The number of publications will depend on the academic area and type of publication but will typically be no less than four and no more than six publications
 - Such publications may include academic journal articles, chapters, monographs, scholarly editions of a text, published reports, creative works in relevant areas, or other artefacts

- Where the student is not the first author in co-authored publications and there is no published statement as to the contribution of each author, the extent of their contribution must be certified by the co-author(s).
 - Publications included in the submission for the PhD by Prior Publication should not have been used in the submission for another research degree
 - Publications should demonstrate that the quality, extent and level of research undertaken is at least equivalent to that expected of a 'traditional' PhD student who has reached the end of the 'writing-up' stage.
- ii. A framing document / introductory section demonstrating that the published works contain unifying themes and comprise a coherent body of academic work that meets the requirements of the award of PhD. This component should:
- Set the published works in the context of existing literature and evaluate the contribution that the research makes to the advancement of the chosen subject or professional area
 - Stress the coherence of the publications, linking them to the methodology adopted
 - Demonstrate the acquisition and utilisation of appropriate research skills equivalent to those of a 'traditional' PhD student who has reached the end of the 'writing-up' stage
 - Include a section relating to the candidate's research methodology. This is particularly relevant if detail regarding methodology is not included in the publications. The PhD is about rigour of research process as well as the originality of the outcomes
 - In cases where the works are jointly authored by the student and other persons (see above), this section should also describe the roles played by these authors, and contain percentage estimates of the student's input into each jointly authored work
 - Be approximately 10,000 words in length, exceptionally where the complexity or volume of work requires further analysis, a higher word count may be submitted up to a maximum of 20,000 words.

Examination procedures

32. The regulations and procedures governing the examination of PhD theses also apply to PhD by Prior Publication (*see Guidance note #7*), except that the examiners' decisions are limited to the following:
- i. That the candidate be awarded the degree;
 - ii. That the candidate be awarded the degree subject to amendments being to the framing document/introductory section within 3 months to the satisfaction of the examiners; or
 - iii. That the material submitted in the portfolio falls short of the requirements, and the candidate not be awarded the degree and not be permitted to be re-examined.

Guidance for examiners

33. These guidelines should be read in conjunction with the Regulations for Postgraduate Research Students.
34. The examiners' main tasks may be interpreted as to:
- Evaluate the intellectual merit of the candidates cited published works
 - Establish if a satisfactory case is made for coherence between publications
 - Assess the contribution to knowledge represented by the publications and made apparent in any critical appraisal

- Evaluate the rigour with which the candidate has contextualised and analysed their publications in any critical appraisal
 - Evaluate the appropriateness of the methods employed in the research and the correctness of their application
 - Assess the candidate's contribution to the various phases of the research embodied in multi-authored works
 - Establish the candidate's 'ownership' of the published work and appreciation of the state of [historical and current] knowledge within the candidate's research area
 - Assess the candidate's research skills in terms of their potential as a continuing, independent researcher.
35. The examiners should note that due to constraints imposed by publishers, published work may contain less detail than a 'traditional' thesis. There may be instances where the evidence available to the examiner about the quality of the work and the raw data on which important conclusions are based is minimal or even absent. Whilst to some extent this should have been addressed in the framing document / introductory section, the oral examination should be used as an opportunity to question the candidate on how conclusions were reached.

Format of submission for examination

36. The thesis should be presented for examination in the standard format outlined in *Guidance note #7*.

Final submission: binding PhDs by prior publication/portfolio

37. The agreed final version of the research work should be presented and bound according to the standard University guidelines as described in *Guidance note #7*.