Protocol for practice-led research degree candidatures

Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Cultures (2017/18)

The following protocol for practice-led research degree candidatures was approved by Graduate Board with effect from 2010-11. The protocol is applicable to the following Schools/accredited institution, offering practice-led research programmes:

School of English
School of Media and Communication (with effect from session 2013-14)
School of Fine Art, History of Art & Cultural Studies
School of Music
School of Performance & Cultural Industries
School of Design
Leeds Trinity University[1] (Journalism, Media and Business – subject areas will be Media, Film and Culture) (with effect from session 2014-15)
York St John University (with effect from session 2011-12)

This outlines specific arrangements for PhD and MPhil practice-led candidates and <u>must</u> be read in conjunction with the University's Code of Practice for Research Degree Candidatures and other regulations associated with the relevant programme of study ([Postgraduate Researcher (PGR) policies and procedures](#)).

Note to Readers: This document sets out the University's Protocol for practice-led research degree candidatures. Arrangements for the implementation of the Protocol specific to the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Cultures (AHC) are described in more detail in shaded boxes.

1. Admission

1.1 It is important to distinguish practice-led applicants from the outset to ensure that candidates (and their supervisors) are aware of the arrangements for practice-led candidatures, as set out in this document.

1.2 Upon application, the School is responsible for identifying and ensuring practice-led candidates are recorded under the specified codes set up in BANNER.

> The Postgraduate Research Tutor within each School within the Faculty of AHC is responsible for ensuring that practice-led candidates are identified at the time of admission and that appropriate details are passed to Postgraduate Research and Operations. GRAD maintains a central record of practice-led PGRs.

2. Training

2.1 Individual schools supported by the Centre for Practice-led Research in the Arts (CePRA) are responsible for arranging a number of training sessions for practice-led research, which will be available to practice-led Postgraduate Researchers (PGRs) in the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Cultures. These will include both introductory sessions and in-depth professionally led master-classes and workshops.

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[1] In some circumstances permission may be given by the University of Leeds' Graduate Board for candidates to undertake practice-led research in Creative Writing

Faculty Graduate School co-ordinates all training at Faculty level and publicises through the Graduate School website. The Director of Postgraduate Research Studies, with support from the Graduate School Manager, will monitor and register all Faculty training.

CePRA may provide and publicise additional *ad hoc* training for Practice Led PGRs in consultation with Director of Postgraduate Research Studies.

School training is the responsibility of the supervisor(s) and is assessed as part of the PGR's research training needs.

The supervisor is responsible for identifying any specific training needs and assessing whether these are being met.

CePRA provides and publicises additional ad hoc training and funding for practice-led research events for Practice Led PGRs in consultation with the Director of PGR Studies responsible for the Schools of Design, English, FAHACS, Media & Communication, Music, and PCI.

3. Transfer assessment

3.1 Confirmation of practice-led status

At transfer stage, the candidate and School are required to clarify that the research project is still defined as practice-led.

Following successful "transfer", it is not possible for PGRs to change to a practice-led research degree. However, if a candidate wished to change from a practice-led research degree, a case could be presented to the Graduate Board (or one of its Groups). A case would usually be presented by the supervisor to the Postgraduate Research Tutor in the first instance.

3.2 Transfer assessment

A practice element should be a mandatory submission requirement at transfer assessment, which is indicative of the practice. This could be a contained performance, small installation or concept to demonstrate practice. The PGR must be required to demonstrate the ability to link practice with the written analysis.

3.3 Defining the final submission

It is important to identify at transfer stage if the candidate intends to include live performance or practice as part of the final submission and, if this will take place prior to submission of the written element, to facilitate arrangements for the early appointment of examiners (see 4.2 below). An intention stated at the transfer stage to include live practice in the final examination will not be binding. If research determines that a live element is no longer required (or dates change), this should be reported as soon as possible and will not have any adverse consequences for the PGR.

However, PGRs who do not declare an intention to include live practice at transfer stage will not be permitted to include live practice as part of the final submission.

In addition to the usual requirements for transfer, a practice-led candidate must set out what he/she expects to include for assessment as the final submission. This must meet the regulations for alternative submissions as set out in the Ordinances

and Regulations and Programmes of Study for Research Degrees. A standard form is available from the Student Education Service website.

3.4   Deferral

In accordance with regulations for a PhD, PGRs could be offered more time to rethink or redo the practice elements. A case for deferral of the transfer decision would have to be made on academic grounds to the Graduate Board. Cases for deferral must be submitted by School/Institute/Faculty. The period of any extension is normally no more than three months and in any event cannot be more than six months.

Within the Faculty of AHC it is the responsibility of the Postgraduate Research Tutor in the relevant School to inform the Graduate Board (via Postgraduate Research and Operations) about the outcome of transfer reviews via GRAD. Requests for permission to defer a transfer decision, on academic grounds, must be via the Postgraduate Research Tutor in the relevant School.

4   Assessment

4.1   **Exam Entry Form**

For candidates commencing study on or after 01 September 2010 the 'Practice-led Research Degree Exam Entry Form' must be completed and returned to Postgraduate Research and Operations a minimum of **3 months prior to the date of the first live practice** (where Examiners are required to view live practice). Where there is no examined live practice event, then the form must be returned a minimum of 3 months prior to the expected submission date of the thesis.

4.2   Assessment of Live Practice/ Early Appointment of Examiners

Where it is considered to be part of the final submission, examiners are normally expected to view live practice. *However, all practice for assessment must be recorded in an appropriate format as a permanent record (see 4.4 below).*

As mentioned in 3.3, candidates should indicate at transfer stage the intention for live practice to be included in the final assessment and as soon as possible provide details of date, venue and time. As this will need to be negotiated and agreed with potential examiners, it may therefore be necessary to identify and appoint examiners at an early stage.

A practice-led exam entry form must be submitted to Postgraduate Research and Operations *at least 3 months prior to the date of the first live practice*. Postgraduate Research & Operations will make the necessary arrangements for the appointment of examiners to be considered by the Graduate Board's Examinations Group. The letter of appointment to examiners will include details of any live practice indicated by the School on the examination entry form which will form part of the submission.

Once examiners have been appointed, the School is responsible for ensuring examiners receive detailed information of date, venue and time of any live practice to be assessed. Please note in some instances this may include more than one event, as outlined and agreed at transfer. It is recommended that the School (and candidate) consider examiners availability when arranging live practice.

Further guidance on the recording and assessment of live practice is provided in 4.4 and 4.5 below respectively.

4.3   Alternative Submission

Candidates undertaking practice-led research may be granted permission by the relevant committee to present for examination an alternative form of thesis. Details of alternative submissions are provided in the Ordinances and Regulations and Programmes of Study for Research Degrees under Regulation 27(a) for PhDs and 37 for MPhils.

The degree of Doctor of Philosophy

"27. Candidates in certain disciplines may be granted permission by the relevant committee to present for examination an alternative form of thesis as follows:

a body of work demonstrating an original contribution to knowledge and scholarship, which comprises of a substantial body of creative practice* produced by the candidate in pursuit of the degree, displaying critical understanding and being worthy of public presentation, together with a written submission, which provides an exploration of the research question(s) and indicates the manner in which the research is embodied in the practice, which will normally be between 15,000-50,000 words."

The degree of Master of Philosophy

"37. Candidates in certain disciplines may be granted permission by the relevant committee to present for examination an alternative form of thesis as follows:

a body of work demonstrating an independent contribution to knowledge and scholarship, which comprises of a substantial body of creative practice* produced by the candidate in pursuit of the degree, displaying critical understanding and being worthy of public presentation, together with a written submission, which provides an exploration of the research question(s) and indicates the manner in which the research is embodied in the practice, which will normally be between 10,000-30,000 words."

Footnote associated with the Regulations
* Areas of creative practice are currently offered in the following Schools: School of Media and Communication, School of English, School of Fine Art, History of Art & Cultural Studies, School of Music, School of Performance & Cultural Industries, and School of Design; and at Leeds Trinity University and York St John University. Requirements for practice-led research degree candidatures are available in the relevant School/Leeds Trinity University/York St John University Handbooks and from Postgraduate Research and Operations.

4.4   Format Regulations

All practice for assessment must be recorded in an appropriate format as a permanent record, which complies with archiving requirements set out by the University Library (including any live practice that has been assessed).

PGRs are reminded that appropriate permissions must be obtained from other people involved in the performance and recording of live practice and that they must comply with the University's ethical procedures (see note 1) and legal requirements of the Data Protection Act (see note 2).

Thesis length

A minimum word limit of 10,000 for MPhil and 15,000 for PhD and maximum word limit of 30,000 for MPhil and 50,000 for PhD is applicable to all practice-led PhDs across all Schools.

It should be noted that the maximum limits are not intended to be interpreted as a requirement for the length of the thesis and that in certain disciplines the thesis may be considerably shorter.

Format for submission

Where the final submission comprises of practice for assessment, in addition to the written thesis, all assessed (and associated) documentation must be presented in the following format:

i.   Submission of documentation prior to examination

Two copies of the following documents must be submitted to Postgraduate Research and Operations prior to examination:

- The documentation (written submission and all other submitted material) should normally be submitted in a box-file (normally A4, but A3 may be used), with appropriate labelling on the front cover[2];
- The written submission, can be soft-bound, and should accord with the "Guide to the thesis examination process"
- A record of the practice for assessment and associated documentation, should be presented in an appropriate format for archiving purposes;
- A table of contents should be firmly pasted on the inside of the box lid;
- CDs, DVDs or other approved media for submission should be submitted in standard slip-cases which should be clearly labelled with detailed contents.

ii.   Submission of final documentation after successful examination

One copy of the following documents must be submitted to Postgraduate Research and Operations after a successful examination (and after amendments where appropriate) along with a completed Thesis Deposit Form:

- The documentation (written submission and all other submitted material) should normally be housed in a box[3]. The covering shall be in the standard form of dark green cloth and lettering shall be gilt, embossed into the cloth, which will be shelved upright with appropriate lettering on the forward edge[4]

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[2] In some cases a box file may not be necessary. For example when only DVDs/CDs will accompany the written submission it may be possible to submit these inside a secure pocket at the back of the thesis. Advice should be sought from the Binders.

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[4] Initials and surname, School, degree, year of submission

(equivalent to a spine on a thesis) and on the front cover[5], in accordance with the "Guide to the thesis examination process;"

- Hard-bound written submission, which should accord with the regulations outlined in the "Format of Hard Bound Theses (after successful examination)" section within the Guide to the thesis examination process"
- A record of the practice, which has been assessed and associated documentation, should be presented in an appropriate format for archiving purposes;
- A table of contents should be firmly pasted on the inside of the box lid;
- CDs, DVDs or other approved media for submission should be submitted in standard slip-cases which should be clearly labelled with detailed contents.

iii. *Submission of the Ethesis*

- Doctoral candidates commencing study in or after September 2009 are required to submit their successful thesis for retention by the Library in both hard bound (as outlined in ii above) and electronic form.

An exact replica of all final documentation submitted after a successful examination, must also be provided in appropriate electronic files (for example pdf, jpeg, mp3) as an eThesis. Advice on eThesis preparation and the process for uploading your eThesis to White Rose Etheses Online is published on the Student Education Service website. Advice on copyright and publication is available through the Library website.

The School/Faculty may also have additional format regulations for alternative submissions, where applicable, these will be outlined in the grey box below.

Schools of Design, FAHACS, Media & Communication, Music, and PCI
The preferred media for submission is CD, DVD or USB. If some of the material the candidate wishes to include in his/her thesis cannot be stored on one of these digital storage devices he/she should discuss the options with their supervisor who, if no suitable solution to the problem can be identified, should raise the issue with Postgraduate Research and Operations.

School of English
Non-digital media storage may be used in cases where such an alternative medium of storage is demonstrable as crucial to the objectives of the research. Alternative formats should be negotiated with supervisor(s) who will also consult with examiners and seek the approval of Graduate Board. In most cases, it will nonetheless be required to provide a digital version of non-digital modes of capture, where possible, to maintain a permanent record as an appendix to the submission.

4.5   Advice for examiners
Practice must be integral within the methodology and dissemination of a practice-led research degree and the final assessment should consider the submission as a whole (practice and written element). In reaching a decision upon the quality of a practice-led submission it is important that examiners do not assess practice and written elements separately.

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[5] Thesis title

Assessment of live practice
There must be no formative feedback by examiners prior to the viva; feedback should be given after the final *viva-voce* examination. Any notes taken at a live practice/performance must not be disclosed and must be retained by the examiner until included in the preliminary report, immediately prior to the final viva-voce examination.

Guidance for preliminary report
As noted above, examiners should consider the submission as a whole. Where live practice is held on the same day as the viva, examiners may wish to add notes to the end of the preliminary report prior to the viva.

Guidance for referral
Current regulations allow examiners at either examination or at a resubmission to ask candidates to pass any tests which they prescribe to demonstrate knowledge. Therefore, for instance, examiners are permitted to ask a candidate to reproduce live performance or a similar task to demonstrate any aspect of practice.

Please note: The above guidance is set out in the Instructions to Examiners.

5   Award

Successful candidates will be awarded PhD or MPhil. Reference to the practice-led nature of the research programme is included in the Bologna Statement and Supplement, which is issued to each successful candidate as an accompaniment to the degree certificate.

Endnotes

[1.] Guidance on ethical procedures and obtaining consent is available at
     http://ris.leeds.ac.uk/
[2.] See the University's Code of Practice on Data Protection
     http://www.leeds.ac.uk/secretariat/data_protection_code_of_practice.html

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