



# UCL Academic Manual 2016-17

## Chapter 8: Derogations and Variations

### Doctor of Public Administration Regulations

Contact: **Lizzie Vinton**, Assessment Regulations and Governance Manager, Academic Services, Student and Registry Services

The following regulations apply to students enrolled on Doctor of Public Administration programmes at UCL. Staff and Students should also refer to the Research Degrees guidance pages of the UCL Academic Manual.

1	ADMISSIONS .....	2
1.1	Standard Qualifications for Admission.....	2
1.2	Alternative Qualifications for Admission .....	2
2	REGISTRATION .....	3
2.1	Dual Registration.....	3
2.2	Initial Registration .....	3
2.3	Exemption from Part of a Programme of Study.....	3
2.4	Course of Study .....	4
2.5	Attendance Requirements .....	5
2.6	Length of Programme .....	5
2.7	Interruption of Study.....	5
2.8	DPA Progression Point .....	6
2.9	Transfer Between DPA and MPhil/PhD.....	6
2.10	Completing Research Status .....	6
2.11	Supervisory Arrangements.....	9
3	ASSESSMENT .....	13
3.1	Assessment of Taught Elements .....	13
3.2	Requirements of a Thesis.....	13
3.3	Examination Entry .....	16
3.4	Appointment of Examiners .....	18
3.5	Conduct of the Research Degree Examination .....	19
3.6	Outcomes of the Oral Examination.....	20
3.7	Research Misconduct .....	21
3.8	Student Complaints Procedure .....	21
3.9	Graduation Ceremonies .....	21

# 1 Admissions

## 1.1 Standard Qualifications for Admission

1. The normal minimum entrance qualifications for registration for the degree of Doctor of Public Administration is the award of a first or upper second class Honours degree, or equivalent overseas qualification, in an appropriate discipline.
2. Relevant postgraduate or policy experience may be acceptable where the first degree is a lower second-class Honours degree or equivalent overseas qualification.

## 1.2 Alternative Qualifications for Admission

1. Applicants possessing alternative qualifications may also be considered by UCL for registration.
  - i) An applicant who possesses a degree or overseas qualification of equivalent standard obtained after a programme of study extending over three years or more in a university (or educational institution of university rank) in an appropriate subject and who, although they do not meet the normal entry standard defined in Section 1.1, but by evidence of their background and experience satisfy UCL as to their fitness to follow the programme. Where such an applicant cannot present evidence that they possess the necessary background and experience, they may be considered by UCL for registration, provided they meet appropriate qualifying conditions prescribed by UCL.
  - ii) An applicant who possesses a qualification obtained by written examination other than those covered above, if UCL is satisfied that the candidate's general education, scholarship, training and experience are suitable for the programme which they wish to follow and that they are at least as well qualified as the candidates who are able to satisfy the entrance requirements in one of the ways prescribed above.
2. UCL may prescribe a qualifying examination for such an applicant prior to admission.

### **Further guidance**

1. Departments wishing to admit such an applicant, as described in 1.2 above, must obtain written authorisation from the Chair of the Research Degrees Committee via [Admissions in Student and Registry Services](#). An applicant for registration may also

## 2 Registration

### 2.1 Dual Registration

1. A student is not permitted to be formally registered for one programme of study at UCL at the same time as being formally registered (or re-sitting examinations) for another programme of study at UCL or any other Higher Education Institution.

#### **Further guidance**

1. Students can accept an offer of a place from UCL when they are still formally registered with another Higher Education Institution, or if they are re-sitting examinations. However, they may not formally register with UCL until they have completed their registration with another institution.

### 2.2 Initial Registration

1. Every student must complete enrolment as instructed within two weeks of the start of their research programme and must undertake to comply with the conditions of enrolment.
2. An applicant for registration is required to produce for inspection by UCL the original documentary evidence of their qualifications either before or at registration — i.e. the original diploma or certificate of the awarding body.

### 2.3 Exemption from Part of a Programme of Study

1. UCL may exempt from part of the programme of study of the DPA degree, research degree students who have commenced a programme of study for the DPA degree (or equivalent degree) of another university in the United Kingdom, provided that the programme of study followed at UCL is not less than one calendar year, or its equivalent in part-time study.

#### **Further guidance**

1. Applications for exemption should be made at the point of admission and are considered on a case-by-case basis.
2. The regulations and criteria for the Recognition of Prior Learning, including the types of prior learning that might be considered by UCL, are defined in the *UCL Academic Manual, Chapter 2: Qualifications and Credit Framework*.
3. Back-dated registration is not usually permitted by UCL. In exceptional circumstances however, requests for back-dating registration may be considered by the Chair of the Research Degrees Committee via the [Student Centre](#) subject to the following conditions:
  - i) The statement from the supervisor and/or the Head of Department gives strong academic reasons for the request and confirms in writing that the student has been undertaking relevant research since this date.

- ii) There is evidence that the student has been fully supervised.
  - iii) There is a good reason provided explaining why the student was not formally registered from the requested start date.
4. If the back-dating is granted, regardless of the time period requested, the student should be aware that he or she is liable for tuition fees from the date of retrospective registration and that the date for submission of the thesis will be calculated from this date.

## 2.4 Course of Study

### 2.4.1 General

1. All research degree students are required to pursue a course of study prescribed by UCL.
2. A programme of study may require attendance at lectures and coursework as prescribed by UCL. A candidate's registration on a UCL programme will be dependent upon their continued satisfactory progress as determined by UCL.
3. All research students are required to use the [Online Research Student Log](#).
4. For more information about the Research Student Log and other requirements see the [Code of Practice for Graduate Research Degrees](#).

### 2.4.2 Doctor of Public Administration

1. The formal taught part of the DPA is comprised of the following elements:
  - i) 6 core modules (60 credits).
  - ii) 2 specialisation modules (30 credits before submission).
  - iii) Pilot study with 120 credits awarded upon successful completion of the MRes component (a research report of not less than 15,000 and no more than 25,000 words with oral examination).

Full-time candidates are expected to complete this project within 12-18 months, and in all circumstances must complete within 24 months.

Part-time candidates are expected to complete this project within 18-24 months, and in all circumstances must complete within 36 months.
  - iv) Candidates are also expected to undertake professional and transferable skills courses and research ethics training. Training for teaching (either in the f62.0 273

## 2.5 Attendance Requirements

1. A programme must be pursued continuously except by special permission of UCL.

reasons. The need to take up or pursue employment during the programme will not normally be considered grounds for interruption of studies.

2. Interruption of study for a period in excess of two calendar years may be granted by the Chair of the Research Degrees Committee subject to the following conditions:
  - i) The period requested will be considered on an annual basis and will not exceed five calendar years from the date when the period of interruption starts;
  - ii) The date when the submission of the thesis falls due following resumption of study falls within ten years of the date of original registration;
  - iii) Written assurances that the research will still be valid are provided by the supervisor and/or the Head of Department, with supporting documentation.
3. The [Changes to your Registration](#) pages of the Current Students website provide further detail on the Interruption of Study procedure.

## 2.8 DPA Progression Point

1. Progression from the initial stage of the DPA degree to the final stage involves fulfilling academic requirements and a progression viva. This progression may be made not less than twelve months after initial registration for the DPA degree for full-time students, and not less than eighteen months after initial registration for the DPA degree for part-time students. A student who fails to achieve progression to the final DPA stage may, if all other conditions are met, be awarded an MRes degree as exit award.

## 2.9 Transfer Between DPA and MPhil/PhD

1. A student may, with the permission of UCL, transfer from the DPA degree to the MPhil/PhD degree, provided they have not entered for the examination of the DPA degree; or from the MPhil/PhD degree to the DPA degree provided they have not entered for the examination of an MPhil or PhD degree.
2. Students wishing to transfer from an MPhil/PhD to a DPA degree, or vice versa, should contact the [Student Centre](#).

## 2.10 Completing Research Status

### 2.10.1 General

1. All research students who have completed their approved period of registration may register as CRS students while they write up their theses. Transfer to CRS status is only permitted with the approval of a student's supervisor or other departmental authority.
2. CRS is permitted for a maximum period of one calendar year (full time) or two calendar years (part time). CRS registration cannot be interrupted; a student who is

prevented from submitting a thesis for reasons beyond his or her control may apply for an extension, as detailed in 2.10.4 below.

3. A DPA student must be registered for at least four calendar years full time or six calendar years part time before he or she will be eligible to take up CRS status. A student who changes from full to part time during the approved period of registration must have been registered for a minimum of one year part time before being entitled to two years of part-time CRS status.
4. In addition to completing the approved period of registration, a student must meet the following conditions before being permitted to take up CRS status:
  - a) Have passed modules to a minimum value of 240 credits;
  - b) Be in a position to submit his or her thesis within 12 months (for full-time students) and 24 months (for part-time students);
  - c) Have met any other departmental or divisional conditions.
5. Further guidance is available from the [Completing Research Status](#) webpages.

## 2.10.2 Completing Research Student Status (CRS): Entitlements

- 1.

## 2.10.4 Extensions to the Completing Research Period

1. A student who cannot submit a thesis for examination before the end of CRS due to circumstances outside his or her control may apply for an extension. The maximum period of extension is one year full time and two years part time.

### Further guidance

1. Applications for extension to CRS must be made on the application form available from the [Extension to Completing Research Status \(CRS\) webpages](#). Applications must be supported by a student's department and may be made on the grounds of illness of student or close relative, maternity leave, bereavement, responsibilities as a primary carer or academic circumstances out of the control of the student. Work commitments or any duties carried out for a department are not considered grounds for extension; submission of a thesis is expected to be a priority. Applications on the grounds of the illness or termination of employment of the Principal Supervisor may be considered but departments are expected to make arrangements for alternative supervision under such circumstances.

## 2.10.5 Submission of a Thesis after the end of CRS

1. A student who submits late will be liable for a late submission penalty fee.
2. A student who does not submit a thesis before the end of his or her CRS registration will cease to be registered as a student at the end of this CRS period. He or she will not be entitled to access to UCL facilities and services and will not be entitled to supervisory advice. In addition, any student who wishes to submit after the end of his or her CRS registration will require permission to do so; this must be supported by a student's supervisor or other departmental authority. If granted, the student will be permitted to submit but will not be re-registered unless his or her department require this.

### Further guidance

1. All students who submit after the end of their CRS registration will pay a penalty fee equivalent to the part-time home fee current at the time (see [Late Submission Fees for Research Students](#)). This fee will come into effect the day after the end of their CRS registration and will increment after three months, six months and nine months. For late submission at any time over nine months after the end of CRS, the fee will be equivalent to 12 months home part-time fees current in the year of submission.

## 2.10.6 Resubmission of a Thesis

1. A student whose thesis is referred by his or her examiners for substantial revision within 18 months will remain registered as a submitted student on the basis of 2.10.3 above, provided the original submission was not after the expiry of a period of CRS status. He or she will have access to UCL facilities and will be entitled to have one draft of his or her thesis read and commented on by his or her Principal Supervisor and/or Subsidiary Supervisor before re-submission. If a student's revisions require



may be required to re-register as a fee-

[Degrees](#) and within the framework of UCL's regulations for Research Degrees in the UCL Academic Manual.

5. For more information on the role of the supervisor see the [Code of Practice for Graduate Research Degrees](#).

## 2.11.2 Supervisors: Eligibility

1. The list of UCL staff categories eligible to act as Principal and/or Subsidiary Supervisors can be found on the [Human Resources website](#).
2. UCL determines the eligibility of staff in these categories to supervise research degree students using the following criteria:
3. A Principal Supervisor for a DPA should normally:
  - a) have satisfactorily completed any probationary period attached to his/her appointment;
  - b) have expertise in the area of the proposed research;
  - c) have had previous experience of at least one successful DPA, MPhil/PhD or EngD supervision within a supervisory team (defined as having taken a student all the way through to a research degree award).
4. A Subsidiary Supervisor for a DPA should normally:
  - a) have expertise relevant to the area of proposed research;
  - b) be familiar with the standards required for DPA, MPhil/PhD or EngD research.
5. A probationary member of academic staff may be appointed as Principal Supervisor if supervision is undertaken within the context of an experienced supervisory team comprising at least one demonstrably active researcher with experience of at least two successful supervisions.
6. A Research Associate may be invited to act as a Subsidiary Supervisor but must, in addition to the requirements specified for Subsidiary Supervisors:
  - a) have a research contract lasting at least three years from the time the supervised student commences his/her programme of study;
  - b) be able to provide evidence of good quality publications for which they have had a substantial degree of responsibility.

### Further guidance

1. Principal Supervisors who are probationary members of staff must also have participated in an appropriate UCL supervisor's workshop.
2. Supervisors who have completed a probationary period but have not previously supervised a research student should also meet the requirements outlined above. New senior members of academic staff with experience of DPA, MPhil/PhD or EngD supervision at other institutions are expected to attend an appropriate UCL supervisor's workshop.

### 2.11.3 Number of Students per Supervisor

1. A supervisor, whether Principal or Subsidiary, may supervise up to the equivalent of six full-time research students at any one time.





2. Students should also include in each copy of their thesis a signed declaration that the work presented is their own. This may be inserted between the title page and the contents

- m) shows a student's ability to design and implement an independent research project.
2. A series of papers, whether published or otherwise, is not acceptable for submission as a thesis. Research work already published, or submitted for publication, at the time of submission of a thesis, either by a student alone or jointly with others, may be included in the thesis. The published papers themselves may not be included in the body of a thesis but may be adapted to form an integral part of a thesis and thereby make a relevant contribution to the main theme of a thesis. Publications derived from the work in a thesis may be bound as supplementary material at the back of a thesis.

### 3.2.3 Language of a Thesis

1. All theses must be written in English.
2. In all cases, the oral examination of a thesis would normally be conducted in English.

### 3.2.4 Word Length of a Thesis

1. The required word length for a DPA thesis is 60,000 – 100,000 words, comprising an overarching analysis component of 40,000 - 60,000 words and a portfolio of policy problems tackled in a policy placement of 20,000 - 40,000 words.
2. The maximum word length includes footnotes, tables and figures but excludes bibliography, appendices and supporting data.

#### **Further guidance**

1. Where the above prescribes the maximum allowable length for DPA theses, this is not necessarily the preferred length. In many instances supervisors may wish to recommend a shorter length. Students should consult their supervisors on the usual length of theses in their subject area or topic.
2. The signature of the student and the Principal Supervisor on the Examination Entry Form to the DPA examinations (see the [Research Degree Examination Entry webpages](#)) shall be taken as confirmation that the thesis submitted is within the required word limit
3. 'Supporting data' refers largely to raw data which is not essential to the argument of the thesis. Appendices are not in the word count and should only include material which examiners are not required to read in order to examine the thesis, but to which they may refer if they wish. Examiners are not required to read beyond the maximum word limits. Where the thesis itself is an edition of a text or texts, normally in the field of literature, the above word limits may not apply.

### 3.2.5 Format of a Thesis

1. The thesis should be submitted in the format determined by UCL at the time of submission. Further information and guidance is available on the [Thesis Formatting webpages](#) and on the [Research Degree Examination Entry webpages](#).

### 3.2.6 Approval of a Thesis Title

1. A student must have the title of his/her thesis approved by his/her Principal Supervisor.
2. The approved title is submitted to UCL on the Examination Entry Form submitted to the [Student Centre](#).

### 3.2.7 Availability of a Thesis

1. After the examination has been completed and before the degree is awarded, successful students are required to submit one soft-bound copy to UCL, via the [Student Centre](#), for lodging in the UCL library.
- 2.



Examination Entry Form the examination entry will be cancelled unless a special case is made for late submission in writing to UCL via the [Student Centre](#).

### 3.3.2 Thesis Submission

1. Prior to examination, candidates are required to submit two soft-bound copies of their thesis to UCL for dispatch to their examiners.
2. After the examination and before the award is made, candidates entering for a UCL award are required to submit one soft-bound thesis and to deposit one e-thesis in the UCL Institutional Repository.

## 3.4 Appointment of Examiners

### 3.4.1 The Appointment of Examiners for Research Degrees

1. Two examiners will be appointed for each candidate in accordance with the UCL Procedures for the Appointment of Examiners (see

- ii) A third examiner may also be appointed where there is a dispute between two examiners about the result of an examination which they cannot resolve between themselves.
- iii) In accordance with UCL regulations, the third examiner must be external to UCL.
- iv) The third examiner will, however, be nominated and appointed through usual UCL procedures and using the Examiner Nomination Form on the [Research Degrees Guidance webpages](#).

## Conduct of the Research Degree Examination

1. The examiners shall prepare independent preliminary reports on the thesis, conduct an oral examination and submit a final, joint report to UCL.
2. The candidate's supervisor shall be invited, unless the candidate indicates otherwise on his/her entry form, to attend the oral examination as an observer. The oral examination will otherwise be conducted in private.
3. The oral examination should be held at UCL.

### Further guidance

1. The examiners shall prepare independent preliminary reports on the thesis to assist in conducting the oral examination. Copies of the preliminary reports for DPA students should be submitted to the UCL [Student Centre](#) together with the final, joint report. The preliminary and joint reports will be released to students.
2. Examiner report forms and procedural information are available from the [Research Degrees Guidance webpages](#).
3. Each final, joint report by the examiners shall indicate whether the thesis meets the requirements specified in Section 3.1 as appropriate and shall include a statement on the examiners' judgement of the student's performance. Examiners have the right to make comments in confidence to UCL in a separate report. Such comments should not be concerned with the performance of the student but may cover matters which they wish to draw to the attention of UCL.
4. All matters relating to the examination must be treated as confidential. Examiners are not permitted to divulge the content of material contained in a student's thesis until such time as any restrictions on access to the thesis, which have been granted by

## 3.6 Outcomes of the Oral Examination

1. Students for a DPA degree must submit a thesis and be examined orally. The following options are open to examiners in determining the result of an examination for the DPA degree:
  - a) If the thesis fulfils the criteria (set out in 3.1) and the student satisfies the examiners in all other parts of the examination, the examiners will report that the student has satisfied them in the examination and the student has passed the research component of the award.
  - b) If the thesis otherwise satisfies the criteria (set out in 3.1) but requires minor amendments, and if the student satisfies the examiners in all other parts of the examination, the examiners may require the student to make, within three months, amendments specified by them. The amended thesis shall be submitted to the examiners, or one of their numbers nominated by them, for confirmation that the amendments are satisfactory.
  - c) If the thesis, though inadequate, shall seem of sufficient merit to justify such action, the examiners may determine that the student be permitted to re-present their thesis in a revised form within 18 months. The examiners may at their discretion exempt from a further oral examination, on re-presentation of their thesis, a student who under this regulation has been permitted to re-present it in a revised form. Examiners may refer a thesis for the DPA degree for 18 months for re-submission in a revised form, on one occasion only.
  - e) If the thesis fulfils the criteria (set out in 3.1), but the student fails to satisfy the examiners at the oral examination, the examiners may determine that the student be permitted to re-present the same thesis, and submit to a further oral examination within a period specified by them and not exceeding 18 months.
  - f) If, after completion of the examination for the DPA degree, the examiners determine that a student has not reached the standard required for the award of the degree nor for the re-presentation of the thesis in a revised form for that degree, DPA candidates may be awarded an MRes degree, based on the completed MRes component, at the discretion of the DPA Board of Examiners.
  - g) The examiners may determine that the student has not satisfied them in the examination and no award will be made.
  - h) The examiners shall not, save in very exceptional circumstances, make any of the above decisions without submitting the student to an oral examination on at least one occasion.
2. In the case of a thesis for the DPA that is referred for 18 months, if the examiners determine that a student has not reached the standard required for the award of the degree, DPA candidates may be awarded an MRes degree, based on the completed MRes component, at the discretion of the DPA Board of Examiners.

### Further guidance

1. Staff and students should also refer to the Doctoral School's [Code of Practice for Graduate Research Degrees](#) for further guidance on the examination of research degree students.

## 3.7 Research Misconduct

1. All cases of suspected research misconduct, including plagiarism, shall be investigated in accordance with the regulations set out in the *UCL Academic Manual, Chapter 5, Section 1.6: Research Misconduct* and with the [UCL Procedures for Investigating and Resolving Allegations of Misconduct in Academic Research](#).

## 3.8 Student Complaints Procedure

1. There is no right of appeal against an academic decision. There is a Student Complaints Procedure in place. Students can lodge a case under this procedure in the circumstances specified. Students and staff should consult *Chapter 1, Section 12: Student Complaints Procedure*.

## 3.9 Graduation Ceremonies

1. UCL will organise Graduation Ceremonies