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**PROCEDURES FOR THE  
APPLICATION, SUBMISSION AND  
ASSESSMENT OF HIGHER  
DOCTORATES**

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## Procedures for the Application, Submission and Assessment of Higher Doctorates

### 1. General Statements

- 1.1 These procedures relate only to higher doctorates awarded by Cardiff University.
- 1.2 Eligibility criteria and criteria for the award are included in the Regulations for Higher Doctorates.
- 1.3 The procedure for assessing submissions for the award of a higher doctorate comprises the following stages:
  - .1 initial application;
  - .2 preliminary review;
  - .3 appointment of assessors;
  - .4 full submission;
  - .5 assessment; and
  - .6 outcome.

### 2. Stage 1: Initial application

- 2.1 Eligible applicants who wish to be considered for the award of a higher doctorate should submit to Education Governance (PGR Quality and Operations):
  - .1 a completed application form;
  - .2 a list of representative publications or compositions (in the case of the DMus) that the applicant wishes to put forward for consideration (see 2.3);
  - .4 a commentary of 2,000 – 2,500 words in length (see 2.6 - 2.7);
  - .5 a curriculum vitae (CV) (see 2.8); and
  - .6 an initial application fee.
- 2.2 Education Governance (PGR Quality and Operations) will acknowledge receipt of the initial application within **14 days**.
- 2.3 Since publishing norms vary by field, there is not a minimum or maximum number of publications required for submission. A small number of internationally recognised or discipline-defining research outputs published

in distinguished arenas may represent as strong a case for the award as a larger number of high-quality or prized papers.

2.4 While not directly comparable, as a guide the publications should collectively reflect the level of recognised achievement required for membership of learned societies.

2.5 As collaborative working is more common in some fields than others, co-authored publications are acceptable where the applicant is a lead author or main research collaborator. As part of the commentary, applicants should explain clearly their own role in the research and, if permitted to full submission, candidates will be expected to provide clear statements of contribution for each jointly-authored publication. The University reserves the right to contact contributors to verify the candidate's involvement.

2.6 The commentary should demonstrate how the publications collectively meet the criteria for the award of a higher doctorate.

2.7 Specifically, it should:

- .1 outline key themes that characterise the work;
- .2 illustrate how the work has made a distinct and original contribution to knowledge/scholarship over a sustained period of time;
- .3 position the work in an international context and in relation to subject-specific literature and expectations; and
- .4 clearly describe the applicant's role in any multi-authored works.

2.8 The CV should include evidence of the recognition and significance of the research, such as through the delivery of keynote addresses at esteemed international conferences, publication of highly-regarded books/papers/compositions that have been shortlisted for international prizes, or consistent and sustained research income generation over and above expected levels for the discipline.

2.9 As part of the application form, applicants will be asked to state how much of the work, if any, has been, or is concurrently being, submitted in candidature for any other degree.

2.10 An initial application may be made at any time during the academic year.

### 3. **Stage 2: Preliminary review**

3.1 The list of representative publications/compositions, accompanying commentary, and CV will be reviewed by a University Panel comprising:

- .1 the Pro Vice-Chancellor of the relevant College, as determined by the particular field of the award, who shall act as Chair;

- .2 a Head of School, relevant to the subject area concerned;
  - .3 a member of professorial staff with sufficient knowledge of the subject, identified by the College Pro Vice-Chancellor.
- 3.2 The Panel will not review any of the publications at this point but will determine whether there is a *prima facie* case for the applicant to be permitted to full submission stage.
- 3.3 The decision, if positive, should not be seen as a guarantee that the degree will be awarded, since the submission will be assessed independently of this Panel.
- 3.4 The Chair will report the Panel's decision to Education Governance (PGR Quality and Operations) within **eight weeks** of receiving the application. Education Governance (PGR Quality and Operations) shall notify the applicant accordingly.
4. **Stage 3: Appointment of assessors**
  - 4.1 If the University Panel is satisfied that there is a *prima facie* case for permitting a full submission, the Chair will nominate two independent assessors to examine the work. Both assessors will be external to the University.
  - 4.2 The assessors must be current or former members of academic staff within the higher education sector at reader or professorial level, or leading industrialists, researchers or practitioners (if relevant for the area of research). They should be distinguished researchers and prolific publishers, and while recognising that the nature of the award is such that the submission is likely to cover a broad subject area, they should possess knowledge and expertise sufficiently specialist to enable a rigorous assessment of the work and its contribution to the discipline.
  - 4.3 Nominated assessors must declare any conflicts of interest with the candidate prior to appointment. Where a conflict is declared, an alternative assessor will be approached.
  - 4.4 Education Governance (PGR Quality and Operations) will make the appointments on behalf of the Senate within **eight weeks** of the Panel concluding the preliminary review.
5. **Stage 4: Full submission**
  - 5.1 If full submission is permitted, candidates will be asked to provide to Education Governance (PGR Quality and Operations) either two hard copies or a single electronic copy of each of the publications listed as part of the initial application.
  - 5.2 The remaining examination fee will be payable at this stage.

5.3 Education Governance (PGR Quality and Operations) will provide to both assessors: a copy of each identified publication; the accompanying commentary; the candidate's CV; relevant Senate Regulations and associated policies and procedures; and the required reports for completion.

5.4 The candidate and assessors are not permitted to contact each other regarding the submission, and Education Governance (PGR Quality and Operations) will act as a point of contact for all queries.

## 6. **Stage 5: Assessment**

6.1 Each assessor will independently consider the submission and provide a detailed report as to the quality, scope and distinctiveness of the works and the alignment with the award criteria. They will also state whether, in their view, the degree should be awarded.

6.2 Specifically, the assessors will be asked to indicate (and include illustrative examples) whether the submission represents and provides evidence of research that is:

- .1 extensive in scale and of the highest quality and distinction;
- .2 authoritative and has had a demonstrable impact on the work of others;
- .3 globally recognised and internationally important;
- .4 illustrative of the candidate's command over the field of study;
- .5 original and distinctive, such that it is worthy of the highest degree;
- .6 reflective of a considerable and sustained contribution to, or application of, knowledge, such that the candidate is an acknowledged expert in the field.

6.3 The purpose of requiring publication is to ensure that the work submitted has been available for criticism by relevant experts. Assessors have the discretion to disregard any of the work submitted if, in their opinion, the work has not been so available for criticism, either on account of its inaccessibility or because it has been submitted for the degree at too short an interval after its publication.

6.4 At the discretion of the assessors, the candidate may be invited to attend an interview to discuss the work. The interview may be held in person at the University or other suitable location, or via electronic means.

6.5 The assessors should return their completed reports to Education Governance (PGR Quality and Operations) within **12 weeks** of receiving the submission.

Where there is a delay, which may include the need to arrange an interview, the candidate will be notified, and revised timescales provided.

6.6 Education Governance (PGR Quality and Operations) will submit the assessors' reports and recommendations to the University Panel convened to undertake the preliminary review (as 3, above).

6.7 In the event of disagreement, a third assessor, external to the University, will be nominated by the College Pro Vice-Chancellor and appointed to assess the submission. The third assessor will not have sight of the other reports.

## 7. **Stage 6: Outcome**

7.1 The University Panel will consider the assessors' reports and, if in agreement that the degree should be awarded, will make a recommendation via Education Governance (PGR Quality and Operations) to the Awards and Progress Committee to that effect.

7.2 In the case of candidates who are potentially eligible to submit for a degree under more than one category (e.g. either DLitt or DSc), the Awards and Progress Committee, on the advice of the University Panel, will decide upon the appropriate higher doctoral degree to be awarded to the successful candidate.

7.3 One copy of the commentary and each of the publications included in the submission will be deposited in the University library (unless a copy is already held) and in the National Library of Wales.

7.4 If the University Panel is unable to recommend the awarding of the degree, Education Governance (PGR Quality and Operations) will confirm the outcome to the candidate on behalf of the University. The candidate will be provided with copies of the assessors' reports, which may be used to inform any future application.

## 8. **Reapplication**

8.1 Applicants not invited to make a full submission following the preliminary review stage, and those whose full submission does not merit the awarding of a higher doctorate, are eligible to re-apply on one further occasion.

8.2 The same University Panel and assessors may be used to assess any re-application, but the submission should be reviewed afresh. Where a new Panel is convened or alternative assessors appointed, copies of the previous reports will not be made available.