

## MATHEMATICAL, PHYSICAL AND LIFE SCIENCES DIVISION

### Procedures for considering D.Sc. applications

1. In addition to fulfilling the requirements of the Examination Regulations to apply for the degree of Doctor of Science, candidates are required to submit: an application form, a curriculum vitae and accompanying notes, for the purpose of setting their publications in context. Candidates are also required to submit a list of all their publications, and a separate list of (including titles, authorship – stating the extent of the candidate's own contribution in respect of each item that is produced in collaboration with another, date of publication, the publisher or journal in which the work is published, and whether any part of the work submitted has previously been accepted for a degree), and two copies of, up to 20 publications that constitute a representative sample of the achievements that they would like to be considered for the degree of the D.Sc. The publications submitted should be fully bound.
2. The Research Degrees Examination Office checks the validity of any application submitted and asks the relevant Head of Department in which an applicant's submission lies to recommend two judges. The following criteria will apply, depending on the circumstances:
  - (a) normally, one internal and one external judge will be recommended;
  - (b) for internal applicants, normally two external judges will be recommended;
  - (c) two external judges will be recommended if the Head of Department considers that there is no-one within the University suitable to judge as an internal examiner;
  - (d) at least one 'reserve' judge should be recommended at the same time as the preferred judges.

The Division will take note of concerns expressed by an applicant, should he/she wish to provide the Research Degrees Examination Office with the name/s of the person/s whom they believe may not act as impartial judges, should they be approached to be appointed. However, the Division reserves the right to appoint a judge it sees as being the most appropriate person to judge an applicant's work.

The Head of Department replies direct to the Research Degrees Examination Office within two to four weeks (depending on the time of year).

3. The Dean of Graduates approves the judges at the request of the Research Degrees Examination Office within two weeks, copied to the Divisional Office. The Divisional Office logs that there is an application in progress.
4. The Research Degrees Examination Office writes to appoint the judges, asking that they accept the invitation within two to four weeks.
5. The Research Degrees Examination Office liaises with the judges, setting a report deadline of three to four months.
6. The judges report to the Divisional Board. The Examination Regulations require that 'In making their report the judges shall state whether the evidence submitted constitutes an original contribution to the advancement of knowledge of such substance and distinction as to give the candidate an authoritative status in some branch or branches of learning.'

The Divisional Board has glossed the definition of the standard required for the award of the D.Sc. as follows: [subject to the approval of EdC]

[‘The wording of the regulation ‘of such substance and distinction as to give the candidate an authoritative status in some branch or branches of learning’ is such as to give considerable scope for interpretation on the part of the judges. Nevertheless judges are asked to set their assessment of the ‘authoritative status’ of the candidate in an international context i.e. would the leading international figures in this branch of science regard this person as having an authoritative status in the field? The phrase ‘branch of learning’ should be interpreted as a field with some breadth, such as might form the subject of major conference or an established journal (e.g. nanotechnology, surface science, bioinformatics, combinatorial chemistry, coastal ocean modelling), rather than a narrow specialised topic.’]

7. The judges’ recommendation will be dealt with as follows:
  - (a) The Dean of Graduates approves unambiguous recommendations to award the D.Sc., which are forwarded to the Divisional Board for report. The Dean of Graduates informs the candidate of their success (copied to the Research Degrees Examination Office), while the Divisional Office arranges for a notice detailing the decision of the Board to be published in the Gazette, and informs the Bodleian Library to expect a copy of the candidate’s submission for deposit.
  - (b) If the judges’ recommendation is not to award, the Dean of Graduates and the Head of Department in whose remit the candidate’s submission falls will consider the application. If the judges’ recommendation is endorsed, the outcome will not be reported to the Divisional Board, but will be communicated to the candidate directly by the Research Degrees Examination Office.
  - (c) If the judges are unable to come to an agreement as regards the candidate’s submission, the Dean of Graduates will either make a casting vote, mediate, or consult the relevant Head of Department for additional input to resolve the matter. Resulting positive or negative recommendations will then be dealt with as detailed above.
  - (d) If the formal approval of a positive recommendation is required during the Long Vacation, when the Divisional Board does not meet, the responsibility for the endorsement of the outcome will be delegated to the Head of Division or his nominee on behalf of the Divisional Board.
8. Candidates receive an anonymised copy of the judges’ report, for feedback purposes. (For applications that were in progress at the time this procedure was agreed, the judges will be asked for their permission to allow an anonymised report to be released to candidates.)

Annexe B of:

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