

4. PhD Regulations

4.1 TRANSFERS FROM MASTER'S LEVEL

4.1.1 A student who has been registered on the MA by Research, MSc by Research, or LLM by Research programmes may be transferred to PhD level by following the process below:

(a) An improved research proposal should be submitted by the student, noting the reasons they believe upgrade is appropriate, and how their original project can be expanded to reach PhD standard. The research project must be scrutinised by the Supervisor(s) and the Research Officer to check it is appropriate to the higher level of degree

(b) A transfer meeting must be held with student, Supervisor(s), and Research Officer. If the outcome approves the re-registration, **Appendix 5. Transfer from Master's to PhD Form** should be completed and sent to research@buckingham.ac.uk. This transfer meeting will act as the first Annual Review at PhD level

(c) The student will be re-registered onto the PhD programme

4.1.2 As the work at Master's level can be carried over to the higher degree, the time spent at Master's level may count directly towards the MPhil or PhD, if deemed appropriate by the Supervisor(s) and the Research Officer. Theoretically, a student may complete their postgraduate study in three years: one at Master's level and a further two at PhD level.

4.2 ANNUAL REVIEWS

4.2.1 The main progress review for each PhD research student is called the Annual Review. At each review, the student will discuss the progress of their project with the Research Officer and their Supervisor(s). Ideally, another academic from the School will join the panel. Reviews will be organised by the Research Administrator, who will contact all parties to arrange a suitable date ahead of each review.

4.2.2 For full-time students, the Annual Review will be conducted at the end of the first year of study (in the student's fourth or fifth term), and then in each subsequent year of study, at any time within the calendar year as appropriate to the student's needs and development. For part-time students the first three reviews follow this same pattern (i.e. yearly), but after the third-year review, assuming progress is good, the review may take place every 18 months.

4.2.3 The student is responsible for ensuring they are available for an Annual Review in the term falling one year after the previous review, and where for any reason this is not possible making alternative arrangements with the panel. Where five terms elapse without a review being held, or without adequate reasoning being provided by the student, it will be presumed that the student has withdrawn.

4.2.4 The purpose of the Annual Review is to satisfy the Research Officer that the student is maintaining progress and performing at an acceptable level for the ultimate award of the

degree. The review also serves to ensure appropriate plans have been made for the continuation of studies over the following year, including review of the work plan and timetable for those studies. In addition, it provides an opportunity for both student and Supervisor(s) to comment on matters concerning research support and supervision without the presence of the other, thus trying to identify and resolve difficulties before tension leads to formal complaints.

4.2.5 The aims of the Annual Review are to assess the progress of the research project but also, as much as is possible, to aid that progress with free and open intellectual discussion. The review should be an opportunity for the student to raise problems about the work-in-progress and obtain candid feedback about how to address them. It is an opportunity for pooling knowledge and for other members of staff to aid the Supervisor(s) by giving their perspective on the project. It is also an opportunity to think through the plan for the next year's research, to consider, for example, resource implications, upcoming conferences, software needs, etc. Once the full discussion has run its course, the Supervisor(s) should be asked to leave the meeting for five minutes so the student can freely discuss their supervision arrangements, and any improvements that might be made.

4.2.6 In the case of a student registered for a PhD, consideration will be given, usually at the first Annual Review, as to whether progress has been sufficient to confirm upgrade to full PhD status, or if the probationary period needs to be extended. If progress is not deemed satisfactory, registration for MPhil status may be recommended by the review panel. The completion of the probationary PhD period and upgrade to full PhD status is not possible without the written recommendation of a review panel. At the upgrade review, the student must demonstrate to the satisfaction of the panel that the project has the potential to achieve the criteria set out in **Section 1.2.2. PhD General Regulations**.

4.2.7 Where a student has been upgraded to full PhD status, a future Annual Review panel may recommend re-registration at MPhil level should progress not prove satisfactory.

4.2.8 Following the Review, the Research Officer should complete **Appendix 4. Annual Review Report Form**. A copy should be sent to each member of the panel, including the student, and forwarded to research@buckingham.ac.uk.

4.2.1 MATERIALS REQUIRED FOR THE ANNUAL REVIEW (TO BE SUBMITTED ONE WEEK BEFORE REVIEW)

4.2.1.1 The student will provide:

- (a) A short written report (approx. 500 words) on work progression thus far, conferences attended either as a speaker or delegate, and future progression plans
- (b) An Extended Research Proposal (in the case that this is the first Annual Review) and/or a sample draft chapter from the thesis
- (c) A completed Annual Review Feedback Survey
- (d) Any other materials as approved or suggested by the Supervisor(s)

4.2.1.2 The First Supervisor will provide:

A short written report (approx. 200 words) on progress to date