



Graduate School

Research Degrees at BU: A Guide to PhD by Publication

September 2010

1. Introduction

This guide has been compiled to provide members of staff at BU with information, guidance and advice on the PhD by Publication. It also sets out the regulations and arrangements in place for the PhD by Publication. It was initially drafted by the Graduate School in consultation with the Research Degree Committee and BU Doctoral Working Group, which represented the interests of all Academic School and draws upon similar arrangements in place at other UK Higher Education Institutions.

It is the intention in all aspects of these arrangements that, where appropriate, the procedures relating to the PhD by Publication mirror those already in place for the 'traditional' PhD in the University, so ensuring equivalence of standards. As such, this guide should be used in conjunction with the Code of Practice for Research Degrees.

2. Regulations

The definition of the award of PhD by Publication is:

"The PhD is awarded to a candidate on the basis of publications or other creative/performance work, together with an accompanying synthesis in which the candidate must demonstrate a critical investigation, providing an independent and original contribution to knowledge, and an understanding of appropriate research methodology for the chosen field. The candidate must also present and defend their thesis, incorporating publications or other creative/performance work appropriate to the candidate's field of research and synthesis, by oral examination, to the satisfaction of the examiners."

The purpose of the award is to enable the degree of PhD to be awarded to candidates on the basis of their original contribution to knowledge and scholarship as manifested in published works. As such, it enables formal recognition of established researchers and/or academics who have a substantial reputation in their fields on the

basis of their record of academic work and for whom enrolment on a PhD programme would be inappropriate. Members of staff, who embark on a Doctoral Track, will undertake a needs analysis to assess whether their academic work and publication portfolio is appropriate for undertaking a PhD by Publication.

3. Eligibility criteria

The eligibility criteria for registration on to a PhD by Publication are as follows:

- a) They shall be members of staff of the University, normally, of not less than two years' standing;
- b) They shall be a graduate of the University with a first class honours or higher degree awarded, normally, not less than five years before the date of application;
- c) The prima facie stage (see Section 5) will provide a 'pre-admission' element to the PhD by Publication;
- d) The maximum period of registration following the prima facie stage will be twelve (12) months although it is expected that many candidates will be able to submit after six (6) months;
- e) Should a candidate registered for a PhD by Publication leave the University before submission, they will continue to receive appropriate support but will be liable for a fee (see Section 9).

If a candidate meets the above criteria and wishes to register for a PhD by Publication, they should have an initial discussion with their Deputy Dean for Research and Enterprise who must support their registration and who will appoint an appropriate advisor (see Section 4).

4. Academic Support

Candidates for a PhD by Publication will require support and guidance on compiling the publications or other creative/performance works to be submitted and writing the supporting document that critically appraises these.

As such, all staff registering for a PhD by Publication will be allocated an advisor by their Deputy Dean for Research and Enterprise.

The advisor appointed will be a member of staff who is experienced in the supervision of doctoral research. Where it is not possible to appoint an experienced advisor within the University, who is an expert in the relevant field, an external advisor may be appointed. In such a situation, an internal 'first' advisor will be appointed from the general subject area.

The role of the advisor will be to:

- a) guide the candidate in the selection, coherence and quality of publications for inclusion in the submission;
- b) guide the candidate as to whether further publications are needed;
- c) support and advise on the development of the critical supporting document;
- d) provide support and advice to the candidate on preparation for the *viva voce* examination.

5. The *Prima Facie* Stage

Candidates for a PhD by Publication will be required to submit an initial *prima facie* stage prior to formal registration on the programme (see Appendix 1). The objective of this is to enable a preliminary judgement to be made as to the quality and coherence of the publications or other creative/performance works to be submitted for assessment, and consequently the likelihood of a submission which will meet the criteria for an award.

Following the initial discussion with the Deputy Dean for Research and Enterprise, and with the guidance of their advisor, candidates should make a *prima facie* case for submission to the School Research Committee. The *prima facie* case should demonstrate that there is a sound basis for proceeding to a formal examination of the PhD by Publication and should include:

- a) a detailed list of the publications/creative work on which the application is based and

which will be submitted in the final body of work;

- b) a critical summary, of approximately 500 words, of the contribution to knowledge represented by the published or other creative/performance works establishing how the works constitute a coherent study. It should also indicate the methodology adopted in the research.

The *prima facie* stage should be sent to the School Research Committee, who will consider the quality and coherence and quality of the publications or other creative/performance works to be submitted for assessment for a PhD by Publication and the likelihood of a submission which will meet the criteria for an award. If the SRC recommends that the candidate be eligible for admission to a PhD by Publication, the documentation, including details of nominated advisor, should be forwarded to the Graduate School for ratification.

Candidates passing the *prima facie* stage, and therefore eligible for admission to a PhD by Publication, will be required to complete the *Postgraduate Research Application/Registration Form - New Students Only*. A hard copy of this, together with guidance notes, is available from the School Research Administrator.

Candidates who do not pass the *prima facie* stage will have the right of appeal and should do so, in writing to their Deputy Dean within four weeks of receiving this decision.

6. Nature and Quantity of Publications or Creative Works

Any submission for a PhD by Publication will involve a coherent body of publications or other creative/performance work, with appropriate currency. These publications must not have been used in the submission for another research degree.

For the purpose of this award, the publications will normally be in the form of written text - articles in peer-refereed journals, books (or chapters therein) or conference papers. Other forms of creative

work may be submitted where they are considered equivalent to peer-refereed articles. These may include original works of art; productions; exhibitions or designs appropriate to the candidate's discipline or medium, presented as a durable, visual record.

Whatever form the published work takes it is necessary that it should, at the very least, have been accessible within the public domain and have undergone a refereed or substantive peer review process. It will also be possible to include some publications which are in press or which have been accepted for publication. Where a candidate includes jointly-authored publications in their submission, they should declare the extent to which the publication is their work and this should normally be certified by all authors concerned. This statement should be bound with the other submitted materials (see Section 7). Publications of any form should normally have been published within the 10 years previous to the date of submission, although the accompanying synthesis can be used to explain the choice of additional publications.

It is not possible to quantify the number of publications or define the amount of creative/performance works, as this is specific to each candidate, their area of research interest and the types of publications submitted. The candidate must explain their choice of publications in the accompanying synthesis.

7. Full Submission, including Supporting Synthesis

The full submission for the PhD by Publication should include a series of publications or other creative/performance works (as outlined in Section 6) and a supporting and overarching synthesis, which draws the publications together and critically appraises them. The publications and the supporting synthesis should be of a standard equivalent to that of a 'traditional' PhD in the relevant academic area and should demonstrate the candidate's original contribution to knowledge.

The synthesis, of between 15,000 to 20,000 words, should set the published work in the context of existing literature and should

evaluate the contribution that the research in the submitted publications makes to the advancement of the research area. It should stress the coherence of these publications, linking them to the methodology adopted. The synthesis needs to include sufficient evidence to help the examiners and readers establish why the publications or creative works meet the requirements for a PhD by Publication.

As with thesis submissions for a 'traditional' PhD, the overarching document and the relevant publications may be submitted in the format outlined in the Guidance Notes for Submission of a Research Degree Thesis.

8. Assessment

Assessment of a PhD by Publication should reflect the same standard as those that operate for 'traditional' PhDs, as detailed in the Code of Practice for Independent Chairs, Internal and External Examiners of Candidates for Research Degree Awards. This assessment will include a *viva voce* examination, and in-line with the regulations in place for a member of staff undertaking a traditional PhD, the examination team must comprise at least two examiners, both of whom must be external – one additional internal examiner may also be present. In both instances, the external examiner must have examined at least once at doctoral level and normally have experience of assessing candidates for a PhD by Publication.

An independent chair of the *viva voce* examination will also be appointed by the SRC, in order to safeguard the candidate's interests, ensure that the regulations and procedures are followed and produce a permanent record of the proceedings.

The requirement for comparability of standards presents different challenges to the examiners and in the case of the PhD by Publication, the examiners' main tasks are:

- To assess the contribution to knowledge represented by the publications and made apparent in the synthesis;
- To evaluate the quality of the candidate's cited published work;

- To establish the coherence between the publications;
- To evaluate the appropriateness of the methods employed in the research and the correctness of their application;
- To place the publications within the time frame and facilities within which the publications were made;
- To establish the candidate's ownership of the published work and appreciation of the state of knowledge within the candidate's research area;
- To assess the candidate's contribution to the various phases of the research embodied in joint or multi-authored works;
- To assess the candidates understanding of their contribution as evidence through their defence.

9. Outcomes of the Viva Voce

The outcome of the examination of a PhD by Publication should reflect those that are in place for 'traditional' PhDs, as detailed in the Code of Practice for Research Degrees and the Code of Practice for Examiners and Chairs of Research Degrees.

Suffice it to say that the publications/creative work is, by definition, already published and in the public domain. The area where examiners are able to ask for modifications is to the accompanying synthesis. As with all research *viva voce*, examiners need to be satisfied with the candidate's defence in the oral examination. As such, the

following recommendations will be available to the examiners:


- a) that the appropriate award be made;
- b) that the appropriate award be made subject to CORRECTIONS being made to the thesis
- c) that the appropriate award be made subject to AMENDMENTS being made to the thesis
- d) that the candidate be permitted to RE-SUBMIT for the degree and be re-examined;
- e) that the candidate be awarded the lower research degree of MPhil
- f) that the candidate NOT be awarded the degree and not be permitted to be re-examined

The recommendations of the examination team will be passed to the Graduate School to be considered for the formal award of PhD by Publication. The award will be ratified by the Graduate School when all documentation has been received; the examiners' decision reviewed and final thesis submitted to the library. The formal award letter confirming the date the award was ratified will then be sent to the candidate.

9. Fees

Full-time members of staff will receive a full fee-waiver when undertaking a PhD by Publication. Graduates of the University should contact the School Research Administrator for details of fees.

Appendix 1

		RESEARCH DEGREE: PHD BY PUBLICATION <i>PRIMA FACIE</i> CASE FOR SUBMISSION			
<p><i>Notes: You are required to establish a prima facie case for submission. Your application will be submitted to the School Research Committee for consideration and once approved, forwarded to the Graduate School for ratification. Text fields will expand as required. Use the TAB key to move to the next field.</i></p>					
1. Personal Research Programme Details					
Surname/Family Name					
First Name(s)					
Proposed School/Institute	<input type="checkbox"/> Ap Sci	<input type="checkbox"/> BS	<input type="checkbox"/> DEC	<input type="checkbox"/> HSC	<input type="checkbox"/> MS <input type="checkbox"/> ST
2. Prima Facie Case for Submission <i>Please write a summary description (c. 500 words) to demonstrate that there is a sound basis for proceeding to a formal examination of the PhD by Publication and highlight the contribution to knowledge represented by the published works establishing how the works constitute a coherent study.</i>					
3. Publication List <i>You should also include a list of the published works on which the application is based and which will be submitted in the final body of work.</i>					
4. Signature					
Applicant's Signature			Date		
FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY <i>(To be completed by the School Research Administrator)</i>					
<i>(To be completed by the School Research Administrator)</i> This Prima Facie Case was reviewed by the School Research Committee at its meeting on: <i>(date)</i>					
Minute Reference: <i>(including full details of any recommendations/amendments)</i>					
Nominated Advisor:					
Chair of SRC's Signature		Date			
<i>(To be completed by the Graduate School)</i> This Prima Facie Case was approved by the Graduate School Academic Board at its meeting on: <i>(date)</i>					
Minute Reference: <i>(including full details of any recommendations/amendments)</i>					
Head of Graduate School Signature		Date			