

Doctoral Degree Conditions & Categories of Registration Policy



Scope: All research programmes leading to an award of City St George's, University of London.

Senate Regulations: Senate Regulation 24.

Summary: This Policy outlines the general principles for doctoral researchers' conditions and categories of registration.

Date approved/re-approved: July 2025.

Date for review:

To be reviewed by the end of 2028/29 academic year, with allowance for minor updates, as required.

Effective from: 1st of August 2025.

Equality and Diversity Statement

City St Georges, University of London is committed to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion in all its activities, processes, and culture, under its Public Sector Equality Duties and the Equality Act 2010. This includes promoting equality and diversity for all, irrespective of any protected characteristic, working pattern, family circumstance, socio-economic background, political belief or other irrelevant distinction.

Where relevant to the policy, decision-making panels will ensure a reasonable gender balance (with at least one man and one woman) and will actively consider representation of other protected groups.

1. Introduction

The following statements should be read alongside the City St George's Regulations for Doctoral programmes and Master's degrees by Research. The statements are intended to provide further clarity on the Senate Regulations that assure the quality and enhancement of research degree provision across the University, and which are outlined in the Framework for Research Degrees.

The University's Regulations apply equally to partnership provision unless different arrangements have been agreed between the University and the partner institution and have received University approval. Details will be set out in the Memorandum of Agreement for the partnership and in information provided to students.

2. General Principles

- All doctoral researchers will be registered initially as MPhil/PhD students (or equivalent) except in those circumstances where a student has transferred from another institution and has provided suitable and appropriate evidence that permits direct registration as a PhD student (or equivalent).
- A doctoral researcher will not normally be permitted to register for a degree programme at more than one institution at any one time unless they are part of an approved joint degree programme. Any candidate wishing to transfer from another institution must have written confirmation from the other institution that it is content to relinquish any rights to the research project before they may register for a research degree at the University.
- A doctoral researcher is appointed a supervisory team during the initial application process. The research idea is often developed in consultation with the supervisory team but in some instances research projects are sponsored by third parties, such as the Research Councils and/or Industrial partners. In both cases, there is a strong commitment to the project, and changes to supervision arrangements are only considered under exceptional circumstances where there is a breakdown of the supervisee/supervisor relationship that has serious consequences for the completion of the project and the well-being of both parties involved.
- Any change to the supervisory arrangements of a doctoral researcher must be in accordance with the Doctoral Degree Supervisors' policy. .
- A doctoral researcher may apply for an amendment to their registration category. This could be:
 - a change between full-time and part-time study;
 - a change between internal and external registration;
- Due to visa restrictions, international candidates may not be permitted to transfer registration from full-time to part-time study. They must, therefore, contact the University's Visa Advice team for clarification on any visa implications during any application for an amendment to the registration category.
- The University is responsible for providing appropriate support to doctoral researchers during their programme via their supervisory team, research groups and centres and the academic department and Schools in which they are based, Doctoral College and other appropriate support services.
- The Doctoral researcher is responsible for maintaining engagement with the University, ensuring progression of the research, and meeting the academic and regulatory requirements for the programme of study.

3. Categories of Registration

- Full-time Candidature

Full-time doctoral researchers will normally be registered as internal candidates and will carry out their research through the University. They should not undertake employment that does not enable them to fulfil their responsibilities as doctoral students. Employment will not be considered a reason for exemption from or suspension of completing the programme.

- Part-time Candidature

Part-time doctoral researchers will normally be registered as internal candidates and will carry out their research through the University. They are expected to spend a minimum of two days (16 hours) per week on their research as outlined in Senate Regulation 24.

- External Candidature

External doctoral researchers pursue a course of research either in an educational institution or in an industrial or commercial organisation, which has been approved as a validated partner. An externally-registered student will be allocated a supervisory team consisting of an approved external supervisor, who will fulfil the role of the First Supervisor, and one current member of the academic staff of the University. External candidates are required to:

- spend at least 4 days per year in the University;
- give an annual seminar on their research;
- meet with their internal supervisor.

The University has a responsibility to ensure that an externally registered student is provided with the appropriate support to be able to carry out their research satisfactorily to completion. An application to register as an external student must be supported with the following information before registration as an external student may be approved:

- the name of the institution/organisation at which the research is to be conducted;
- the academic and professional qualifications and experience of the proposed external supervisor, in the form of a brief resumé, and details of their current employment;
- an outline of the proposed contact arrangements between the student, internal supervisor and proposed external supervisor, especially where students are studying overseas.

It is important to note that these are minimum attendance requirements for a research degree awarded by the University; the University does not offer research degrees by distance learning.

- Staff candidature

Staff candidates are current or retired members of staff. The Doctoral College Board of Studies, upon recommendation from the Chair of the School Research Degree Programme Committee, shall decide whether a candidate is registered as either a staff or student candidate and, on that basis, will agree on the supervision arrangements and the minimum and maximum periods of candidature and the examination arrangements.

4. Registration Categories' Changes

Reasons for changing registration category may include, but not limited to:

- a. Change in Financial circumstances;
- b. Change in Personal circumstances (e.g. caring responsibilities, bereavement or severe illness);
- c. Change in Employment.

- Change between full and part-time study

The minimum and maximum periods of candidature and the deadlines for any outstanding milestones will be calculated pro-rata when a student changes between full and part-time study.

- Change between internal and external registration

Any application to transfer registration from internal candidature to external candidature must be supported with the following information before a change in registration may be approved:

- the name of the institution/organisation at which the research is to be conducted;
- the academic and professional qualifications and experience of the proposed external supervisor, in the form of a brief resumé, and details of their current employment;
- an outline of the proposed contact arrangements between the doctoral student, internal supervisor and proposed external supervisor, especially where doctoral students are studying overseas.

Specifically, the appropriate committee will assess the following three requirements when considering any application for transfer to external registration:

- that external registration is the most appropriate type of registration for the student;
- that the institution at which the student will be based is recognised as a validated partner;
- that the external supervisor is appropriate and is aware of the University's expectations;
- that there exists clear lines of communication between the student, internal supervisor and external supervisor.

5. Approvals

Any allocation of, or amendment to, the registration category of a new or existing doctoral student requires approval from the Doctoral College Board of Studies on the recommendation of the School's Research Degrees Programme Committee and Senior Tutor/Director of Research.

Policy Title	
Doctoral Degree Conditions & Categories of Registration	
Policy Enabling Owner and Department	Responsible for Implementation and Department
Doctoral College Board of Studies	Doctoral College Board of Studies School Research Degrees Programme Committee
Approving Body	Date of Approval
Senate, upon the recommendation of the Doctoral College Board of Studies	9 th of July 2025 07/10/2020 13/12/2023
Last Reviewed & Version	Review Due Date
December 2023 (January 2020 & May 2022 respectively)	July 2028
Publication of Policy (<i>tick as appropriate</i>)	
For public access online (internet)? ☒	For staff access only (intranet)? ☐
Website Link: https://www.citystgeorges.ac.uk/about/governance/policies/doctoral-researcher-policies/ _nocache	Intranet Link:
Storage of Policy (<i>Previous versions of the policy must be stored in the drive by the author</i>)	
Drive Address: CUoL – Doctoral College Documents	
Queries about this policy should be referred to	
Doctoral College doctoralcollege@citystgeorges.ac.uk	