

## Framework for Research Awards 2025-26

<b>Approved by:</b> Academic Board	<b>Effective date:</b> 1 August 2025	<b>Next review:</b> June 2026
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### Framework statement

This framework sets out the specific requirements for the operation of Research Awards at Canterbury Christ Church University [the University].

### Who needs to know about the framework?

- Pro Vice-Chancellors
- Deans and Associate Deans of School
- Teaching Staff
- Managers, supervisors and administrators
- Students
- Applicants

### Purpose of the framework

This framework sets out the specific requirements for the operation of Research Awards at Canterbury Christ Church University [the University].

### Contacts

The University's Quality Assurance and Enhancement Team and Graduate College Team are responsible for:

- Providing advice and assistance
- Guidance and templates
- Accessing training

The team can be contacted by emailing: [quality@canterbury.ac.uk](mailto:quality@canterbury.ac.uk) or [graduatecollege@canterbury.ac.uk](mailto:graduatecollege@canterbury.ac.uk)



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## Framework for Research Awards 2025-26

### 1. Scope of the Framework for Research Awards

- 1.1. This framework sets out the specific requirements for the operation of Research Awards at Canterbury Christ Church University [the University].
- 1.2. All Research Degrees awarded by the University must comply with the University's Academic Framework, specifically the Regulations for Research Awards and any course specific Additional Course Regulations.
- 1.3. Where Professional Doctorates have a taught stage, the taught stage will operate under the University's Regulations for Taught Awards and underlying procedures.
- 1.4. This Framework applies to all Research Degree courses at the University.

### 2. The Research Awards

- 2.1. The University has two categories of research awards:
  - (i) Subject Specialist Research Degrees;
  - (ii) Professional Doctorates.
- 2.4. Within the two categories, the University has approved a number of courses, namely:
  - MPhil/PhD by thesis (category i)
  - MPhil/PhD by portfolio (category i)
  - PhD by publication (category i)
  - MA by Research and MSc by research (category i)
  - Doctorate of Education, Doctorate of Business Administration and Doctorate in Clinical Psychology (category ii).
- 2.5. The currently approved directly delivered subject specialist research courses require no further approval process for their delivery within a specific School. Taught credit-bearing components of professional doctorates require University approval.

### 3. Subject Specialist Research Degrees

#### **MPhil/PhD**

- 3.1. The University awards subject specialist research degrees through its MPhil/PhD and courses. The MPhil/PhD is not credit rated and enables candidates to demonstrate their original contribution to knowledge, by submitting EITHER:
  - (i) by thesis; defined as a single submission produced for the express purpose of this award, demonstrating an original contribution to knowledge; or
  - (ii) by portfolio; defined as a set of prospective research outputs that may stand alone in their own right, which together demonstrate an original contribution to knowledge; or

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- (iii) by publication (PhD only), defined as a retrospective portfolio of interconnected, published research outputs contextualised by a coherent narrative, demonstrating overall an original contribution to knowledge.

### Masters by Research

- 3.2. The University awards subject specialist research degrees through its Masters by Research courses. The Masters by Research comprises 180 credits at Level 7 and enables candidates to demonstrate their original contribution to knowledge:
- (i) by thesis; defined as a single submission produced for the express purpose of this award, demonstrating an original contribution to knowledge.

### Professional Doctorates

- 3.3. The University's professional doctorates are Research Awards that include a taught component and comprise original research within a professional area.
- 3.4. The course leading to the award of Doctorate in Clinical Psychology [DClinPsychol] has been approved outside the remit of this Framework, and authority for the operation of the course resides in the Research Regulations and Validation Document for the course.
- 3.5. Professional Doctorates comprise 540 credits, with not more than 180 credits of taught modules at Level 7 and not less than 360 credits for research at Level 8.
- 3.6. The taught element of a Professional Doctorate constitutes a discrete stage, with a pass/fail progression point at the completion of this stage. A student who does not pass the progression point will not be permitted to continue on their course but will be awarded the exit award for which they meet the criteria.

## 4. Examiners

- 4.1. All internal and external examiners for doctoral courses require the approval of the Research Degrees External Examiner Approval Panel.
- 4.2. Internal and external examiners will be appointed for the Masters by Research, MPhil/PhD, DBA and EdD to examine a specified doctoral or Masters submission.
- 4.3. The arrangements for the appointment of internal and external examiners for the DClinPsychol are set out in the [Examiners for Research Degrees](#) procedure.

## 5. The Research Degrees Board

- 5.1. Deriving authority from the Academic Board, the Research Degrees Board is responsible for making authoritative progression and award recommendations for students studying on Research Degrees. It will act for all research degrees, other than the DClinPsychol:
- (i) as the Board of Examiners for Research Awards;



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- (ii) to scrutinise and approve final research proposals, upgrades, annual/periodic reviews and final reviews;
  - (iii) to approve applications for the award of PhD by publication;
  - (iv) to approve review delays, interruptions, extensions, applications for pre-submission status and withdrawals;
  - (v) to approve supervisor status for the range of roles on supervisory panels.
- 5.2. The Board will be scheduled in order to deliver progression and award decisions in a timely way.
- 5.3. The Board will be composed of the Senior Pro-Vice Chancellor (Research, Enterprise and Business Development), the Dean of the Graduate College, up to two members of the Research Degrees Sub-Committee by rotation, a member of Registry Services and the Secretary to the Board.

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