



Appendix 5: Confirmation of PhD registration

[Regulation 16](#) requires all probationer PhD candidates to submit a satisfactory report and to pass an oral examination conducted by a Board of Examiners in order to confirm their registration as a PhD candidate.

In addition, all doctoral students are required to have successfully completed the online academic integrity training and test, produced a data management plan, obtained ethics committee approval (where appropriate) and to have completed training in research integrity by the date of their first progression check point (confirmation for probationer PhD candidates).

The nature of your research will obviously determine the kinds of questions and issues which will arise in the course of your PhD confirmation examination, and your supervisor(s) will advise you, but here are some guidelines to have in mind when preparing your confirmation report:

- Clearly state the research question(s) to be addressed (this may be in the form of a hypothesis to be tested), their purpose, and why they are important.
- *In the oral examination: be able to articulate your aims and defend them.*
- Provide a succinct background to the topic that gives the context for the research question, based on published literature, including up to date citations where appropriate.
- *In the oral examination: be able to expand on the background presented.*
- Document methodology employed or to be employed, link it to the research question(s), and explain how the chosen approach will provide appropriate data to answer the question(s).
- *In the oral examination: be able to explain the basis of the methodology and to give examples of its previous utilisation. If you have done a case study, be ready to explain what kind of case study it is, the sampling, and applicability of findings in the context of the contribution to knowledge your work will make. Students in Humanities & Social Sciences and the School of Management using mixed methods should explain how they will be negotiated.*
- Present some primary data and demonstrate, where appropriate, how these are manipulated and interpreted.
- *In the oral examination: be able to defend the experimental design and data handling and/or interpretation (including the application of appropriate statistical tests if relevant).*
- Critically evaluate work undertaken to date against the background literature.
- *In the oral examination: be able to address the impact and limitations of the data.*
- Include a substantial plan of future work, building on results to date or developing alternative approaches. Timelines may be included.
- *In the oral examination: be able to discuss these plans knowledgeably and without waffle.*
- Include an appropriate list of references.
- *In the oral examination: be able to demonstrate knowledge of the contents of key cited papers.*
- Attach a data management plan, for the research data that will be generated.
- *In the oral examination: be able to discuss features of the plan that are in place to ensure research data organisation and integrity, and that support future use.*

[Regulation 16.5](#) sets out the full range of recommendations available to the Progression Board of Examiners