

ACADEMIC REGULATIONS

Introduction

The Royal College of Art has established regulations, which define conditions that must be satisfied in order for a given process or processes to take place. These include:

- Financial Regulations – conditions that must be satisfied in order for the College to release its funds for any purpose;
- Information Technology Regulations – conditions that must be satisfied in order for an individual to gain and maintain access to the College's information technology provision;
- Library Regulations – conditions that must be satisfied in order for an individual to gain and maintain access to the College's library provision.

This document articulates the College's Academic Regulations. These are the regulations that must be satisfied in order for the College to award one of its degrees.

The Academic Regulations are approved by the Senate.

In addition to the Academic Regulations the College also publishes a range of policies, terms and conditions and other governance documents that articulate the College's commitments to, and requirements of, its staff, students and other stakeholders. These include:

- The Admissions Policy (defining the College's commitment to ensuring admissions practices that are fair, transparent and equitable);
- Terms and Conditions of Registration (articulating the commitments made by the College to each student and each student to the College when completing registration);
- The Student Complaints Policy (defining the College's commitment to ensuring complaints procedures that are fair, efficient and transparent);
- The Academic Appeals Policy (defining the College's commitment to ensuring that appeals against academic decisions of the College are dealt with fairly, efficiently and transparently while also ensuring that academic standards are upheld)

The College's Student Policies can be viewed [here](#)

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

ACADEMIC BOARD FOR CONCESSIONS & DISCIPLINE (ABCD) – The committee of Senate with primary responsibility for confirming awards of the College.

ASSESSMENT PANEL – a panel constituted to review a student's work in detail and make recommendations to non-awarding and awarding boards.

AWARDING BOARD – A board constituted at the level of academic school to consider final recommendations on programme-level awards to the ABCD

COLLEGE – The Royal College of Art

CONTINUATION STATUS – a period of registration undertaken by a research student, during which they have completed their research programme, and are writing up the results. Students on continuation status will not normally have access to formal supervision sessions

DEFERRAL – A decision taken before an assessment takes place to postpone that assessment, on grounds of ill health or other circumstances beyond the control of the student.

DEGREE – A validated qualification of the College, at Graduate Diploma, PG Cert, PG Diploma, MA, MRes, MPhil or PhD level, Detail of the degrees offered by the College are published on the College website.

ENROLMENT – The process by which students confirm arrangements for the payment of fees for the year, and accept any revised terms and conditions of registration. Students are advised annually of the process they must undertake to complete enrolment.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE (LOA) – an approved period of up to one year (6 terms for part-time students), in which the student will remain registered to their programme of study but will not be required to enrol. Students taking an LOA will not pay any tuition fee for the duration of the LOA, and will not be able to access facilities offered by the College.

LEVEL – the academic level of study, as defined by the College, which shall be consistent with the Quality Assurance Agency's Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ)

NON-AWARDING BOARD – A board constituted to consider and approve results of individual units or elements of programmes, and to consider decisions on progression to subsequent stages of the programme

REFERRAL – A requirement for a student to repeat, and pass, an element or elements of assessment by a specific date. Students may only be referred for elements of assessment that they have not already passed.

REGISTRATION – The process by which an individual becomes a student of the College. Registration includes confirmation of the fee and visa status of an applicant, confirmation that the applicant has appropriate qualifications for entry to a programme and acceptance by the applicant of the College's terms and conditions. Students are advised, via their offer letter and subsequent communications from the Registry, of the process they must undertake to complete registration.

SENATE – The primary academic committee of the College.

STUDENT – an individual who has registered, and has not completed, withdrawn from, or had their registration terminated from, a programme of study offered by the College

SCOPE

The Charter, Statutes and Ordinances of the College provide for the establishment of these regulations, which define the conditions that must be satisfied in order for an award of the College to be made to a student.

The Academic Regulations apply to all registered students of the College.

The Academic Regulations that apply to an individual student shall normally be the regulations in force on the first date of the student's registration. Where amendments are made during the period of the student's registration that are advantageous to the student then the revised Academic Regulations shall normally apply.

Under no circumstances shall the Academic Regulations be applied retrospectively for students whose registration has completed (whether through graduation, withdrawal, or termination).

General Regulations

The General Regulations apply to all students who are registered to degree programmes of the College, including Graduate Diploma, PG Cert, MA, MRes, MPhil and PhD students.

Registration

1. Each student must register for a programme¹ of the College, by completing the registration process published by the Registrar. Registration is confirmed when the student signifies their acceptance of the College's Terms and Conditions of Registration, meets any conditions outlined in the College's offer of a place on one of its programmes, and completes payment of the first instalment of the fee, as defined in the Terms and Conditions. Only students who have been offered, and have accepted, a formal offer of a place on a programme of the College may register.
2. Students may only be examined for the degree that they are registered to. Students may be awarded an "exit" award, where they have not met the requirements for the award that they are registered to, but achieved criteria for a separate award as defined in the programme specification and these regulations.
3. Registration is considered complete when a student has graduated with the degree that they have registered to.
4. The registration of a student may be terminated on the grounds of academic failure, as specified in these regulations.
5. The registration of a student may be terminated on the grounds of misconduct or academic misconduct, as specified in the relevant College policies.
6. The College may accept a student onto a programme and grant exemptions from parts of the programme where the student has certificated learning gained from a previous programme, taken at the College or elsewhere. Any such exemptions are granted at the discretion of the College, on the basis that the student has already demonstrated achievement of the defined learning outcomes of the College programme. Any request for exemption from parts of a College programme must be approved by the Academic Board for Concessions and Discipline (ABCD); the maximum amount of any programme that a student may be exempted from is 50%.

Transfer of Registration

7. Students may only transfer registration to another programme of the College with the approval of the ABCD, acting on the request of the accepting head of programme or equivalent.

Enrolment

¹ Research students shall normally register to a School rather than a programme; for the purposes of these regulations a research student's programme shall be regarded as the school to which they are registered.

8. Each student must enrol annually for the duration of their programme, unless they have taken an approved Leave of Absence (LOA) (see Regulations 11 - 12). Enrolment must be completed in accordance with the enrolment process published annually by the Registrar.
9. Unenrolled students may not be examined, and shall not have access to College facilities. Students who fail to complete enrolment by a date published by the Registrar shall be considered to have withdrawn from their programme of study, and their registration shall be terminated.

The Award of Degrees

10. Only the Senate or the ABCD acting on behalf of the Senate has the authority to award a degree of the College, to permit a student to re-submit their work for re-assessment, or to fail a student.

Leave of Absence

11. A student may apply to their head of programme (or Head of Research Programmes for research programmes) for a Leave of Absence (LOA), in accordance with the policy and criteria specified in the College's Leave of Absence Policy.
12. Leave of Absence is normally restricted to a maximum of one year for a full-time student or six terms for a part-time student. While on LOA the student will remain registered to their programme, but not enrolled. They will not pay fees during their period of absence and will not have access to any facilities of the College during this time. No student may be examined while on LOA.

Non Attendance at Assessment

13. If a student fails to attend for assessment or to submit work for assessment, and does not have extenuating circumstances acceptable to the relevant assessment panel (see Regulations 15 - 19) the ABCD has the authority to deem the student to have failed that assessment.

Termination of Study

14. Other than failure in an assessment required for completion of the programme, a student whose work or participation in the programme is unsatisfactory shall be entitled to receive a written warning, which shall be referred to the ABCD. A student who has received a written warning, but does not meet the criteria for work or participation specified within that warning by a date to be specified in the warning, shall have their registration terminated upon the approval of the ABCD.

Extenuating Circumstances

15. An Assessment Board or Panel may approve an application from a student for an element of assessment to be deferred in accordance with the College's Extenuating Circumstances Policy. The Assessment Board or Panel will consider:

- Do the Extenuating Circumstances meet the definition of acceptable mitigating circumstances?
- Were the Extenuating Circumstances exceptional, short-term, unforeseen and unpreventable?
- What is the proximity of the events covered by the Extenuating Circumstances claim to the timing of the relevant assessment(s)/examinations?
- The suitability and validity of the evidence submitted.

On the information provided the Assessment Board or Panel will decide whether:

- to reschedule the examination/assessment
- to set an alternative piece of work
- for marginal fails, to consider the student as a pass
- no action - as there has been no evidence of the student's assessment/examination performance being affected.

Requests for consideration of Extenuating Circumstances should be submitted on the relevant form to the General Manager of the relevant School or for Doctoral students, the Head of Research Programmes, or their nominee no later than 24 hours after the assessment deadline. In these circumstances the student's original attempt will not count as an attempt at the assessment (i.e. the student may be referred if they do not pass the rescheduled assessment).

16. Where a postgraduate research student has a claim for Extenuating Circumstances in relation to their viva voce examination accepted, then that student may only be examined via a rescheduled examination.
17. Where a student is judged by the assessment panel to have marginally failed their assessment and the student has Extenuating Circumstances, then the assessment panel may apply to the ABCD for the student to be considered as a pass in that assessment.

Academic Misconduct

18. Allegations against students of cheating, gaining an unfair advantage or any other assessment offences shall be considered in accordance with the College's Academic Misconduct Policy.

Appeals

19. Appeals against assessment outcomes shall be considered under the College's Academic Appeals Policy.

Revocation of Degrees

20. Where information is provided that the award of a degree was made in contravention of the Academic Regulations in force at the time of the degree then the Registrar may apply to the ABCD to have that degree revoked.

21. The ABCD may, upon application from the Registrar, revoke an award of any student subsequently found to have contravened the College's Academic Misconduct Policy in the course of producing work for assessment for the award of that degree.

Regulations for Taught Programmes of Study

The Regulations for Taught Programmes of Study apply to all students who are registered to Graduate Diploma, PG Cert, MA and MRes programmes of the College.

Attendance

22. Students are expected to attend all scheduled teaching sessions as directed by their head of programme. Failure to do so may lead to the termination of a student's registration (see Regulation 14).
23. A student who is absent through illness must notify their Head of Programme. If a student is away for more than three days, a medical certificate will be required. Failure to provide a medical certificate within 21 days of the student's return to College may lead to the termination of a student's registration.
24. Applications for absence on compassionate grounds, for periods of up to 21 days, must in all cases be made to the Head of Programme for approval. Unauthorised absence may lead to the termination of a student's registration.
25. Students holding a student visa are required to follow any policy on regular attendance set by the UK government. Programme staff are required to report any unauthorised non-attendance to the Registry who in turn are legally required to report this to the UK government in accordance with the College's Attendance and Engagement Policy. Non-attendance reported to the UK government shall lead to the student's visa being curtailed and the right to stay in the UK revoked, along with the termination of the student's registration.
26. Applications for periods of study leave of up to 31 days must in all cases be made to the Head of Programme for approval. During a period of study leave a student's enrolment continues and tuition fees remain payable.
27. Regulations for periods of absence of longer than specified in regulations 25 - 29 shall be considered in accordance with Regulations 11 - 12 (Leave of Absence)

Referral in an Element of Assessment

28. Students who have not met the required standard to pass an element of assessment, and do not meet the criteria to be awarded a "pass subject to corrections", may be referred. A student who has been referred shall be set, in writing, a specific programme of work to be submitted for assessment, which will normally be expected to take at least one week to complete. For Graduate Diploma students the deadline for submission of this work shall normally be no earlier than 5 weeks and no later than 7 weeks, after confirmation of the decision to refer the student by a non-awarding board/awarding board. If the revised work remains inadequate, the student shall be considered to have failed the programme, and their registration on the programme shall be terminated.

29. Any student may be awarded a pass subject to corrections within their referral assessment, in accordance with Regulations 35 - 38. A student not completing the corrections outlined by the examination board in relation to a referral within the specified time scale shall be considered to have failed the assessment.
30. No student is permitted to be referred from any given assessment on more than one occasion.

Progression

31. Each programme shall specify, in its programme specification, any progression points, where students shall be required to have reached a defined standard (including completion of any units) in order to progress to the next stage of the programme. Students who have not met the defined standard may only progress to the next stage of the programme with the explicit approval of the ABCD.

Pass Subject to Corrections

32. A student who has been awarded a pass subject to corrections shall be advised of any amendments or additional work to be completed, which should be completed to a deadline, specified by the relevant Board, of no less than one week, and no more than one month, from notification of that Board's decision.
33. The relevant Board may nominate one of its members to consider the amendments and determine, on behalf of the panel, whether to recommend to ABCD that the student has now passed the assessment.
34. Should a student not meet the conditions of a pass subject to corrections within the time frame then the student shall be considered referred, and shall be subject to the provisions of regulations 31 - 33

Aegrotat Degrees

35. Students who are unable to complete their programme due to ill-health may be considered for an aegrotat award.
36. Aegrotat awards may be made by the ABCD, on the recommendation of the final assessment panel and Awarding Board.
37. In order to be considered for an aegrotat award, the Awarding Board shall consider the body of work which has been completed together with records of the student's performance and progress during the programme of study. The Awarding Board shall determine whether the evidence demonstrates that the student would have been likely to have reached a standard qualifying them for the award of the appropriate degree under normal circumstances.
38. If, on the recommendation of the Awarding Board, the aegrotat degree is conferred upon a student by the ABCD, that student shall not be eligible thereafter to re-enter for assessment for the degree.

Posthumous Degrees

39. Deceased students who were unable to complete their programme as a result of their death may be considered for a posthumous award.
40. Posthumous awards may be made by the ABCD on the recommendation of the Awarding Board.
41. In order to be considered for a posthumous award, the Awarding Board shall consider the body of work which has been completed together with records of the student's performance and progress during the programme of study. The Awarding Board shall determine whether the evidence demonstrates that the student would have been likely to have reached a standard qualifying them for the award of the appropriate degree under normal circumstances.

Regulations for the Graduate Diploma Programmes of Study

The regulations for Graduate Diploma programmes of study apply to students registered to Graduate Diploma programmes only

Award

42. To be eligible for the award of a Graduate Diploma, a student must have been awarded 120 credits at level 6, in units specified in the programme specification for the programme to which the student is registered.

Assessment

43. The assessment methods for each unit shall be defined in the programme specification for the programme to which the student is registered. These assessment methods shall include detailed guidance as to how the final module result shall be calculated (see Regulation 47).
44. The final unit result for each unit shall be an integer between 0 and 100. The pass mark for each unit shall be 40. The maximum mark that may be awarded for a piece of work submitted under the referral provisions of these regulations shall be 40 (see Regulations 31 - 33).

Final Examination Board

45. There shall be a Final Examination Board (FEB) for each student. The purpose of the FEB is to enable students to demonstrate that they have fulfilled the objectives of the programme of study and that they have achieved the standard for the award that they are registered to.

Membership of FEB

46. The normal composition of the FEB will be:
 - The Deputy Vice-Chancellor & Provost, or their nominee (Chair)
 - Head of Programme for the Graduate Diploma
 - A tutor / senior tutor / visiting lecturer from each pathway of the Graduate Diploma, nominated by the Head of Programme
 - External examiner

47. FEBs shall normally meet at the completion of the programme to consider recommendations. The quorum for any such meeting shall be five, including the Chair and External Examiner. Meetings may be conducted by video conferencing or other remote methods where necessary. Where remote methods are used, board members must have the opportunity to vote upon each recommendation to be made by the FEB.

Conduct of Final Examination

48. The FEB shall receive and consider a report on the performance in each unit for each student. The report shall recommend, for each student in each unit, one of the following decisions:
- Pass (where the unit result is between 40 and 100).
 - Pass subject to corrections (normally where the unit result is between 35 and 40 – see Regulations 35 -37)
 - Refer (normally where the unit result is between 20 and 35; the degree of failure should be no more than could be retrieved within 6 weeks. See Regulations 31-33)
 - Fail (where the work does not meet the necessary criteria to pass the module and cannot reasonably be expected to be amended to meet the criteria within the time available).
49. Following consideration of unit results, each student that has achieved 120 credits shall be awarded an overall mark, which shall be an integer between 0 and 100. This mark shall be calculated by multiplying the unit mark for each unit by the number of credits awarded for that unit, and then dividing the sum of these scores by the number of credits for the programme (normally 120). The FEB shall then make a recommendation for the final award for each student as follows:
- To award the student a Graduate Diploma with Distinction (a student must have an overall mark of 70 or above, and have met the requirements outlined in Regulation 45);
 - To award the student a Graduate Diploma with Merit (a student must have an overall mark of between 60 and 69 inclusive, and have met the requirements outlined in Regulation 45)
 - To award the student a Graduate Diploma (a student must have an overall mark of between 40 and 59 inclusive, and have met the requirements outlined in Regulation 45)
 - To refer the student (see Regulations 31 - 33 and 51)
 - To fail the student.
50. Where the overall mark falls within 1% of a grade boundary, the Final Examination Board shall have discretion to consider awarding the higher grade. Criteria for the use of this discretion shall include:
- Exit velocity (achievement of higher marks towards the end of the programme);
 - Unrepresentative performance in one module which reduces the overall mark.
51. Each member of the FEB has an equal voice in the deliberations of the Board and the final decision. However, without the agreement of the external examiner, the award of the degree may not be recommended and must be referred to the ABCD

acting on behalf of the Senate. In such circumstances, the external examiner will be asked to provide a written report for the ABCD.

Regulations for the Postgraduate Certificate Programmes of Study

Award

52. To be eligible for the award of a Postgraduate Certificate, a student must have been awarded 60 credits at level 7, in units specified in the programme specification for the programme to which the student is registered.

Assessment

53. The assessment methods for each unit shall be defined in the programme specification for the programme to which the student is registered. These assessment methods shall include detailed guidance as to how the final unit result shall be calculated.

Final Examination Board

54. There shall be a Final Examination Board (FEB) for each student. The purpose of the FEB is to enable students to demonstrate that they have fulfilled the objectives of the programme of study and that they have achieved the standard for the award that they are registered to.

Membership of FEB

55. The normal composition of the FEB will be:
- The Deputy Vice-Chancellor or their nominee (chair);
 - At least two tutor/senior tutors who have taught on the programme
 - One external examiner
56. FEBs shall normally meet at the completion of the programme to consider recommendations. The quorum for any such meeting shall be three, including the Chair and External Examiner. Meetings may be conducted by video conferencing or other remote methods where necessary. Where remote methods are used, board members must have the opportunity to vote upon each recommendation to be made by the FEB.

Conduct of Final Examination

57. The FEB shall receive and consider a report on the performance in each unit for each student. The report shall recommend, for each student in each unit, one of the following decisions:
- Pass (the student has met the requirements for the award)
 - Pass subject to corrections (the student has not met the requirements for the award, but, in the judgement of the FEB, can do so by making minor corrections to one or more of the submissions for assessment – see Regulations 35 - 37)
 - Refer (the student has not met the requirements for the award and should resubmit one or more pieces of work to be re-considered for the award. See Regulations 31 - 33)

- Fail (where the work does not meet the necessary criteria to pass the module and cannot reasonably be expected to be amended to meet the criteria within the time available).
58. Each member of the FEB has an equal voice in the deliberations of the Board and the final decision. However, without the agreement of the external examiner, the award of the degree may not be recommended and must be referred to the ABCD acting on behalf of the Senate. In such circumstances, the external examiner will be asked to provide a written report for the ABCD.

Regulations for the MA Programmes of Study

The regulations for MA, MEd, MFA, MArch, MDes, programmes of study apply to students registered to MA programmes only

Award

59. To be eligible for the award of an MA, a student must have been awarded a minimum of 180 credits at level 7, in units specified in the programme specification for the programme to which the student is registered. Individual programmes may specify a higher number of credits which must be passed in order for that award to be made. All students studying MA programmes are required to take the unit 'AcrossRCA', which is a compulsory unit and spans over two terms. 'AcrossRCA' is an elective option for MFA, MRes, MDes, MArch and MEd programmes. If a student completes a MA programme and progresses to a MFA, MRes, MDes, MArch and MEd programme, they cannot take 'AcrossRCA' as an elective as they have already taken and passed this module. Students who do not complete the programme to which they are registered, but do complete 120 credits or more of that programme may be awarded a Postgraduate Diploma, on the recommendation of their Awarding Board, subject to the approval of the ABCD.

Assessment

60. Students shall be required to take one or more formal assessments during the course of their programme. The purpose of these assessments is to ensure that the student continues to make reasonable progress towards achieving the published learning outcomes for the programme. It's a student's responsibility to be fully familiar with the assessment submission and deadlines for their programme of study. If a student does not submit their assessment in the prescribed way, this will be considered a non-submission and automatic referral.
61. Each student's formal assessments shall be assessed by an assessment panel against criteria published in programme handbooks. The assessment panel shall recommend, to non-awarding boards, for each student and for each element of assessment, one of the following decisions;
- Pass (where the assessment panel considers that the student's work has met the necessary criteria to progress to the following stage of the programme)
 - Pass subject to corrections (where the assessment panel considers that the student's work does not meet the necessary criteria to progress to the following stage of the programme, but can reasonably be amended in a short space of time to meet the criteria – see Regulations 35 - 37)

- Refer (where the assessment panel considers that the student's work does not meet the necessary criteria to progress to the next stage of the programme and requires more detailed work to meet the criteria; the degree of failure should be no more than could be retrieved within one term. See Regulations 31 - 33)
 - Fail (where the assessment panel considers that the work does not meet the necessary criteria to progress to the next stage of the programme and cannot reasonably be expected to be amended to meet the criteria within the time available).
62. Where a student is referred in a maximum of one unit within a term, the non-awarding board may decide either to permit that student to continue with their studies pending completion of the unit in question, or alternatively may require that student to take a leave of absence to return the following year with a view to passing that assessment. Students referred in more than one unit shall be reviewed termly to determine whether they continue on the programme or are required to take LOA .
63. Each assessment panel (not including an assessment panel constituted to assess the Independent Research Project – see Regulation 66) must consist of at least two members, a lead examiner and a secondary examiner. The minimum composition for an assessment panel shall be as follows:
- An Assistant Dean, Head of Programme, Senior Tutor or Tutor, with responsibility for teaching on the relevant programme, on an AEF contract, nominated by the Dean (Lead Examiner);
 - Any member of staff who meets the criteria for Lead Examiner *or* a member of academic staff of tutor-level or above, who may from a School other than the one with responsibility for the programme.
64. The Independent Research Project assessment panel for each student shall consist of at least three people. The minimum composition of the panel shall be:
- A Dean of School, Assistant Dean, Head of Programme or Senior Tutor, with expertise in the discipline that they are assessing (Lead Examiner);
 - Any staff member in the above category *or* a tutor from any one of the College's academic schools (Secondary Examiners)
 - An internal moderator, personal tutor or programme tutor (where any of these individuals have not already been appointed as lead or secondary examiner.
65. Associate Lecturers may form part of an assessment panel, but each panel must contain at least one member of staff on an AEF contract.
66. Each programme must establish a non-awarding board, responsible for approving unit results and referral deadlines, to be held at the end of each term. Non-awarding Boards may be established for more than one programme. The minimum composition of a non-awarding Board shall be:
- A Dean or Assistant Dean (Chair)
 - The Head of Programme or a Senior Tutor from that programme

Awarding Boards

67. Awarding Boards shall be convened for each of the College's Schools. The purpose of Awarding Boards is to ensure that each non-awarding board has been properly constituted and are discharging their responsibilities for assessing the achievement of academic standards by its students appropriately.

Membership of Awarding Boards

68. The normal composition of an SEB shall be:
- Dean of School (chair);
 - The Assistant Dean
 - The head of each programme within that School's purview
 - The Senior Tutor for each programme within that School's purview
 - Each external examiner for programmes within that School's purview.

Conduct of Awarding Boards

69. Awarding Boards shall have responsibility for considering assessment results, and for making recommendations on awards to the ABCD. The Awarding Board shall consider results for each student completing their programme and make one of the following recommendations:
- To make an award of the College, in accordance with these regulations;
 - To make an award of the College subject to corrections (see Regulations 35 - 37);
 - To refer the student (see Regulations 31 - 33);
 - To fail the student.
70. The Awarding Board shall approve the programme of work for referred students. The programme of work for referred students should be achievable within the specified timeframe.
71. Each member of the Awarding Board has an equal voice in the deliberations of the Board. However, without the agreement of the external examiners, the award of the degree may not be recommended and must be referred to the ABCD acting on behalf of the Senate. In such circumstances, the external examiners shall be asked to provide a written report for the ABCD.

Viva Voce Examinations

72. Programme specifications for individual programmes may specify viva voce examinations for individual units or elements of assessment.
73. The Assessment Panel for any viva voce examination shall consist of a minimum of three members, with more than one member of academic staff, and shall include at least one member of staff on an AEF contract. The exact composition of the panel in each case shall be approved by the relevant Non-Awarding Board.
74. Where external examiners cannot be present for any viva voce examination an appropriate "sampling" method shall be employed, such as use of videos or transcripts of examinations, to enable external examiners to confirm that appropriate standards have been met in viva voce examinations.

Regulations for the MRes Programmes of Study

The regulations for the MRes programmes of Study apply to all students registered to MRes programmes only

Independent Research Project

75. Master of Research students are required at the end of their programme to complete an Independent Research Project to the satisfaction of the Head of Programme and pathway leader. A student who fails to meet this requirement will not be awarded a Master of Research.
76. *(Not applicable for MRes Healthcare Design students – see Regulation 85 - 86).* The Independent Research Project must be written in English. It must consist of a minimum of 12,000 and a maximum of 15,000 words in length, or a body of practice and a written report of 4,000 words. Any project submitted which is more than 10% under or over the maximum word length will be referred (see Regulations 31 - 33).
77. Students will also be expected to submit a 1,500 – 2,000 word supporting statement that reflects on the process of developing, managing, and communicating the results of a research project, and an updated professional development plan that specifies on-going goals.
78. The Independent Research Project must be submitted in accordance with the instructions published annually by the Research Office.
79. The Independent Research Project requirements for students working on practice-based programmes should be agreed between the Head of Programme and the pathway leader.

Assessment other than Final Assessment

Role of Assessment Panels

80. *(Not applicable to MRes Healthcare Design students)* There shall be two assessments during the programme. Students will be required to submit a portfolio of work for assessment by an assessment panel.

Membership of Assessment Panel

81. The minimum composition for an assessment panel will be as follows:
 - the Head of Research Programmes, Dean/Associate Dean, or a member of the academic staff, at senior tutor level or above, nominated by the Head of Research Programmes
 - one tutor/senior tutor from the programme.
82. The assessment panel will make one of the following recommendations:
 - the student passes the assessment
 - the student passes the assessment subject to corrections (see Regulations 35 - 37)
 - the student is referred for re-submission (see Regulations 31 - 32):
 - the student fails the assessment and is not permitted to be re-examined.

Final Examination

Final Examination

83. A Final Examination Panel (FEP) is convened to enable students to demonstrate that they have fulfilled the objectives of the programme of study and that they have achieved the standard for the award of a Master of Research degree. Students may only be examined on the degree for which they have been registered.
84. The Final Examination will consist of a viva-voce, which takes place following submission of the independent research project.

Membership of Final Examination Panels

85. *(Not applicable to MRes Healthcare Design students)* The FEP will be constituted as follows:
- The head of programme
 - A dean/associate dean or pathway leader
 - A member of academic staff at senior tutor level or above nominated by the head of programme (Chair) who is not from the students' school (and has been approved by the Director of Research and Innovation)
 - external examiner(s).

Responsibilities of the Boards

86. After the viva voce, the FEP will make one of the following recommendations:
- the student passes the Final Examination
 - the student passes the Final Examination, subject to corrections being made to the Independent Research Project, to the satisfaction of the Chair of the FEP. Such amendments should be completed within three months.
 - the student is referred for re-submission within 12 months to be re-examined under one of the following conditions (see also Regulations 31- 32):
 - o the Independent Research Project must be revised substantially and if deemed satisfactory by the FEP, the candidate will be exempt from further oral examination;
 - o the Independent Research Project must be revised substantially and the candidate must undergo a further oral examination;
 - the student fails the Final Examination and is not permitted to be re-examined.

DEGREE OF MASTER OF RESEARCH HEALTHCARE DESIGN

The regulations for the Master of Research in Healthcare Design apply only to students registered to the MRes Healthcare Design

Research Project

87. Each student must submit an independent research project (see Regulation 84). The project must be a minimum of 10,000 and a maximum of 15,000 words in length, and is accompanied by an oral examination. Any project submitted which is more than 10% under the minimum or over the maximum word length will be referred (see Regulations 31 - 32).

Progress Review

88. A formal Progress Review will take place termly with a student's programme or pathway leader, at which the programme or pathway leader will confirm satisfactory progress, or alternatively set conditions that the student must fulfil in order to continue on the programme.

89. Any conditions set by the programme leader must be fulfilled to the satisfaction of the programme leader within a minimum of 1 month. Should the conditions not be fulfilled then the programme leader may recommend to the exam board that the student be deemed to have failed the programme.

Assessment Other than Final Examination

Role of Assessment Panels

90. Students will be required to submit a portfolio of work for assessment for consideration during their study.
91. On the recommendation of the Assessment Panel and with the approval of the ABCD, a student whose work is not satisfactory will be set, in writing, a specific programme of work to be submitted for examination at the following examination board. Depending on the nature of the referral project an earlier referral date may be agreed by the programme team. If this work is not satisfactory, the student's course will be terminated forthwith.

Final Examination

Membership of Final Examination Panel

92. The normal composition of the Final Examination Panel will be:
- the head of programme, Dean/ Associate Dean or a member of the academic staff - at senior tutor level or above - nominated by the Dean of the School of Design (Chair);
 - one tutor/senior tutor from the programme
 - internal moderator
 - the student's personal tutor where he or she is not otherwise a member of the Final Examination Panel

RESEARCH DEGREES

The research degree regulations apply to students registered for the degrees of MPhil and PhD

Registration Periods

93. The minimum and maximum registration periods for the degrees of MPhil and PhD are:

PhD

- Full-time minimum registration period 3 academic years, and Confirmation/Transfer should take place no sooner than the end of year 1 and no later than the end of year 2 (see regulations 111 - 126);
- Full-time maximum registration period 4 academic years, and Confirmation/Transfer should take place no sooner than the end of year 1 and no later than the end of year 2 (see regulations 111 - 126);
- Part-time minimum registration period 6 academic years, and Confirmation/Transfer should take place no sooner than the end of year 2 and no later than the end of year 4 (see regulations 111 - 126);

- Part-time maximum registration period 7 academic years, and Confirmation/Transfer should take place no sooner than the end of year 2 and no later than the end of year 4 (see regulations 111 - 126);

Continuation Status is included in the maximum registration period and is for a maximum of one academic year.

MPhil

- Full-time minimum registration period 2 academic years²
- Full-time maximum registration period 3 academic years
- Part-time minimum registration period 4 academic years
- Part-time maximum registration period 6 academic year

Doctoral Training Programme

94. All students must attend the College doctoral training programme unless alternative arrangements have been agreed in advance by the ABCD. All students are required to attend at least 80 per cent of the mandatory sessions in order to progress to the next year of study.

Examinations

95. Candidates must comply with instructions issued by the Research Office on the practical arrangements to be followed in order for any examination to take place. Failure to do so may result in examinations being suspended or cancelled.

Annual Progress Review

96. There shall be a formal Annual Progress Review (APR) of each student's work (part-time and full-time students) which shall take place annually (usually in May), other than when this is replaced with Transfer, Confirmation, or Final Examination. Student progress will be assessed at these Reviews by an APR panel. Only those students whose progress is accepted by the ABCD as being satisfactory will be permitted to proceed to the next year. The APR will include a judgement on the student's progress in achieving defined objectives, including achievement of objectives defined in the student's Individual Training Needs Analysis.
97. On the recommendation of the APR Panel, and with the approval of the ABCD, a student whose progress is not satisfactory will be referred (see Regulations 31- 32).

Membership of APR Panels

98. The minimum composition for an APR panel will be as follows
 - the dean/ associate dean or a member of the academic staff, at senior tutor level or above, nominated by the Dean (chair);
 - one tutor/senior tutor³ from the student's School or Research Centre, who is not part of the supervisory team
 - the student's supervisor(s).

² MPhil candidates can apply for examination for their award at a minimum of 1 year full-time registration in exceptional circumstances. Submission for examination at the end of year 1 requires approval by ABCD.

³ For examinations taken by students registered to the Helen Hamlyn Centre for Design this shall be replaced by one senior research fellow who is not part of the supervisory team

The Panel may seek advice from any appointed external consultant:

99. For students registered jointly between two schools or research centres, the APR panel should include the postgraduate research lead for the lead school and the postgraduate research lead for the second school, or their nominees. The lead school is defined as the school which will be responsible for arranging annual progress reviews, confirmation, transfer, and / or final examinations and other administrative requirements in consultation with the second school. Where either of the postgraduate research leads is, or has been, the supervisor of the student being examined, the APR panel should be chaired by another postgraduate research lead, or a senior tutor from another school, who is an experienced research supervisor.
100. It is the responsibility of the Chair of any assessment panel to ensure that correct procedures and standards are adhered to, both during and after the examination and that all paperwork is submitted in a timely fashion (ideally this should form part of the exam scheduling).
101. The membership of the APR panel to consider a referral submission should normally be identical to that which made the referral decision. An observer may attend and participate in the concluding discussion at the request of the examiners and the Chair of the APR panel.

Transfer Examination Panels

Role of the Transfer Examination Panels

102. Students registered to the degree of MPhil may, at the discretion of their supervisor, submit for a transfer of registration to the degree of PhD. In order to be eligible to transfer to PhD, a student should be able to demonstrate: a high level of competence in the development and implementation of the research methodology; present a case that the research has progressed to a greater focus and depth; and have formulated an hypothesis for further research which would, in the opinion of staff and external experts, be likely to produce an original contribution to knowledge.

Membership of Transfer Examination Panels

103. The minimum composition of a Transfer Examination Panel shall be as follows:

- A member of academic staff from the student's school or Centre, at senior tutor or head of programme level or above, who is not part of the supervisory team. This person will be nominated by the school's postgraduate research lead (chair);
- one research tutor/senior tutor from the student's school;
- the student's supervisor(s);
- an independent additional member of the academic staff with experience of research supervision, from another school or Research Centre.

The Panel may seek advice from any appointed external consultant:

104. The minimum composition of a Transfer Examination Panel for students registered jointly between two schools or research centres will be as follows:

- The lead school's postgraduate research lead or a member of academic staff at senior level or above nominated by the lead school's postgraduate lead, who is not part of the supervisory team (chair);
- the postgraduate research lead from the second school/Centre or member of academic staff, at senior tutor level or above nominated by the postgraduate research lead from the second school or Centre;
- an additional member of the academic staff with experience of research supervision, from another school or Research Centre.

The Panel may seek advice from any appointed external consultant:

105. Where the postgraduate research lead is, or has been, the supervisor of the student being examined, the Transfer Examination Panel should be chaired by a postgraduate research lead, or a senior tutor, from another school who is an experienced research supervisor. In this instance the additional member of academic staff is not required.
106. It is the responsibility of the Chair of the Transfer Examination Panel to ensure that correct procedures and standards are adhered to, both during and after the examination.
107. In the case of an unsuccessful transfer examination, the candidate will be allowed to be re-examined at the discretion of the Transfer Examination Panel. Re-examination should take place within three months of the original examination.
108. The membership of the Transfer Examination Panel to consider a referral submission should normally be identical to that which made the referral decision. An observer may attend and participate in the concluding discussion at the request of the examiners and the Chair of the Transfer Examination Panel.

English language requirements

109. Candidates who do not speak English as a first language prior to the transfer examination will be required to provide evidence that within the previous two years they have achieved an IELTS exam score of at least 7.0 with an additional score of 7.0 in writing (or the equivalent from another recognised English Language assessment test, acceptable to the ABCD) **before** being permitted to take the transfer examination.

Confirmation Examination

Role of the Confirmation Examination Panels

110. Students registered *ab initio* for the degree of PhD must, within 24 months or the part-time equivalent of their initial resubmission, undertake a confirmation examination, in order to confirm that the student remains on track to submit and be successfully examined for a PhD. Students who do not pass their confirmation examination may be required to re-register for the degree of MPhil.

Membership of Confirmation Examination Panels

111. The minimum composition of a Confirmation Examination Panel shall be as follows:

- A member of academic staff from the student's school or centre, at senior tutor or above, who is not part of the supervisory team. This person will be nominated by the school's postgraduate research lead (chair);
- one research tutor/senior tutor from the student's school;
- the student's supervisor(s);
- an independent additional member of the academic staff with experience of research supervision, from another school or Research Centre.

The Panel may seek advice from any appointed external consultant:

112. The minimum composition of a Confirmation Examination Panel for students registered jointly between two schools or research centres will be as follows:

- The lead school's postgraduate research lead or a member of academic staff at senior level or above nominated by the lead school's postgraduate lead, who is not part of the supervisory team (chair);
- the postgraduate research lead from the second school or member of academic staff, at senior tutor level or above nominated by the postgraduate research lead from the second school;
- an additional member of the academic staff with experience of research supervision, from another school.

The Panel may seek advice from any appointed external consultant:

113. Where the postgraduate research lead is, or has been, the supervisor of the student being examined, the Confirmation Examination Panel should be chaired by a postgraduate research lead, or a senior tutor, from another school who is an experienced research supervisor. In this instance the additional member of academic staff is not required.

114. It is the responsibility of the Chair of the Confirmation Examination Panel to ensure that correct procedure and standards are adhered to, both during and after the examination.

115. The Confirmation Examination Panel shall, after the examination, make one of the following recommendations to the ABCD:

- Pass (the student may proceed towards examination for the degree of PhD, subject to continuing satisfactory academic progress);
- Pass subject to corrections (the student may proceed towards examination for the degree of PhD, subject to the student making minor corrections to the submitted work, to the satisfaction of the Confirmation Examination Panel, within three months of notification of the decision);
- Referral (the student may not proceed towards examination for the degree of PhD, and must make substantial changes to the work that they have submitted, within twelve months of notification of the decision. Students may only be referred at confirmation examination on one occasion);
- Re-register to MPhil (the student may not proceed towards examination for the degree of PhD, but may re-register for the degree of MPhil);
- Fail (the student's registration shall be terminated)

116. Where ABCD confirms a decision of pass subject to corrections or referral, but the corrections are not subsequently made to the satisfaction of the Confirmation Examination Panel within the deadline set then the student shall normally be required to re-register to MPhil.
117. The membership of the Confirmation Examination Panel to consider a referral submission should normally be identical to that which made the referral decision. An observer may attend and participate in the concluding discussion at the request of the examiners and the Chair of the Confirmation Examination Panel

Final Examination

Status of Final Examination Panel

118. A Final Examination Panel (FEP) is convened to enable the student to demonstrate that he or she has fulfilled the objectives of the programme of research and has achieved the standard for their award.

Membership of Final Examination Panels

119. The composition of an MPhil FEP will be:
- A Dean/ Associate Dean, postgraduate research lead or member of academic staff at senior tutor level or above nominated by the Dean (chair) who is not from the students' school / research centre or part of the students' supervisory team (and who has been approved by the Director of Research & Innovation);
 - At least one internal examiner, appointed by ABCD;
 - At least one external examiner, appointed by the Senate in accordance with the College's External Examiner Policy.
120. The composition of a PhD FEP will be:
- A Dean/ Associate Dean, postgraduate research lead or member of academic staff at senior tutor level or above nominated by the Dean (chair) who is not from the students' school / research centre or part of the students' supervisory team (and who has been approved by the Director of Research & Innovation);
 - At least two external examiners⁴, appointed by the Senate in accordance with the College's External Examiner Policy.
121. The external examiners shall have an equal voice in the deliberations, oral examination and final decision. Where the examiners are unable to agree upon a recommendation on the award of the degree, the decision must be referred to the ABCD acting on behalf of the Senate. The Chair shall be responsible for ensuring that the examination is conducted fairly and according to the regulations, but shall not contribute to the final recommendation of the examiners.
122. The membership of the FEP to consider a referral submission should normally be identical to that which made the referral decision. An observer may attend and participate in the concluding discussion at the request of the examiners and the Chair of the FEP.
123. After the viva voce, the **MPhil** FEP will make one of the following recommendations:
- the student passes the Final Examination;

⁴ For the examination of MPhil the College may appoint one internal examiner, from a school other than the school to which the student is registered.

- the student passes the Final Examination, subject to minor corrections⁵ being made, to the satisfaction of the Chair of the FEP. Such amendments should be completed within three months;
- the student is referred for re-submission within 12 months and is to be re-examined as follows:
 - o the project/thesis must be revised substantially and if deemed satisfactory by the FEP, the candidate will be exempt from further oral examination, or
 - o the project/thesis must be revised substantially and the candidate must undergo a further oral examination
- the student fails the final examination and is not permitted to be re-examined.

124. After the viva voce, the **PhD** FEP will make one of the following recommendations:

- the student passes the Final Examination;
- the student passes the Final Examination, subject to minor corrections⁶ being made, to the satisfaction of the Chair of the FEP. Such amendments should be completed within three months.;
- The student passes the Final Examination, subject to major corrections being made, to the satisfaction of both Examiners of the FET. Such corrections should be completed within 6 months;
- the student is referred for re-submission within 12 months and is to be re-examined as follows:
 - o the project/thesis must be revised substantially and if deemed satisfactory by the FEP, the candidate will be exempt from further oral examination, or
 - o the project/thesis must be revised substantially and the candidate must undergo a further oral examination
- the student fails the final examination for the award of PhD, but is recommended for the award of MPhil
- the student fails the final examination and is not permitted to be re-examined.

125. The composition of the FEP for a submission for PhD by Practice will be as for a submission for a PhD by Thesis, except that, of the two external examiners appointed by the Senate, one shall be a recognised authority in the studio discipline and the other shall be a recognised authority in the theoretical implications of the programme.

DEGREE OF MPhil

These regulations apply to students registered to the degree of MPhil only

Submission Requirements

126. On completion of the programme of research the student's submission will be examined by a Final Examination Panel

MPhil by Thesis

⁵ For the avoidance of doubt, minor revisions are small adjustments including, but not limited to, typographic errors, bibliographic adjustments, small clarifications and definitions that the Chair of the Exam Panel can check have been completed accurately. Anything beyond this would be considered to be appropriate for major modifications / referral.

⁶ For the avoidance of doubt, minor revisions are small adjustments including, but not limited to, typographic errors, bibliographic adjustments, small clarifications and definitions that the Chair of the Exam Panel can check have been completed accurately. Anything beyond this would be considered to be appropriate for major modifications / referral.

127. The submission for the degree MPhil by Thesis shall consist of a written thesis in English presenting the results of research in the field of history, theory or practice of art, design or communication, supported, where appropriate, by practical work related to the research. The required length of the thesis shall be between 30,000 and 40,000 words (footnotes and appendices are not included, but should not exceed 10,000 words; the bibliography is outside of all word counts), illustrated as necessary and accompanied by an abstract. Any thesis which is over 40,000 words in length shall be referred (see Regulation 119).

MPhil by Practice

128. The submission for the degree of MPhil by Practice shall consist of a work or group of works of art, design or communication, presented in the form of original(s), prototype(s), scale model(s), drawings, CD-ROM, photographs, film(s), or sound and vision recording(s), together with a piece of written work in English, defining the purpose of the work, the factors taken into account in its conception and development, and explaining the results. The work submitted must demonstrate progression in knowledge or understanding in the candidate's discipline, or in related disciplinary areas.
129. The length of the report and other written work shall be 5,000 to 20,000 words (footnotes and appendices are not included, but should not exceed 10,000 words; the bibliography is outside of all word counts), illustrated as necessary and accompanied by an abstract. The textual and practical elements of the project should be conceived as a whole, with both aspects reaching the required standard of MPhil as outlined above. Any report which is over 20,000 words in length will be referred (see Regulation 119).

Final Examination

130. Before the degree of MPhil is conferred, the student must present to the Research Office an electronic copy of the thesis, including any non-textual elements (e.g. sound or image files), which constitute part of the submission, for lodging in the College's digital repository. The following copyright statement should be included in each thesis: 'This text represents the submission for the degree of Master of Philosophy at the Royal College of Art. This copy has been supplied for the purpose of research for private study, on the understanding that it is copyright material, and that no quotation from the thesis may be published without proper acknowledgement'.

DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

These regulations apply to students registered to a PhD only

Submission Requirements

PhD by Thesis

131. The submission of research in a theoretical discipline shall comprise a written thesis in English presenting an account and the results of a programme of research in the field of history, theory and practice of art, design or communication, supported, where appropriate, by practical work related to the research. The thesis shall be between 60,000 and 80,000 words in length (footnotes and appendices are not included, but should not exceed 20,000 words; the bibliography is outside of all word

counts). It shall be illustrated as necessary and accompanied by an abstract. Any thesis which is over 80,000 words in length shall be referred (see Regulation 131).

PhD by Practice

132. The submission of research in a studio discipline shall comprise a work or works of art, design or communication, or a group of interrelated works of art, design or communication, presented as appropriate in the form of original(s), prototype(s), scale model(s), drawings, CD-ROM, photographs, film(s), or sound and vision recording(s), together with a piece of written work in English, defining the purpose of the work, the factors taken into account in its conception and development, and explaining the results.
133. The work submitted must demonstrate progression in knowledge or understanding in the candidate's discipline, or in related disciplinary areas. The written component shall be not less than 25,000 words and not more than 40,000 words in length (footnotes and appendices are not included, but should not exceed 10,000 words; the bibliography is outside of all word counts), illustrated as necessary and accompanied by an abstract. The textual and practical elements of the project should be conceived as a whole, with both aspects reaching the required standard of PhD as outlined above. Any written component which is over 40,000 words in length shall be referred (see Regulation 131).

Requirement for Copies of Final Submission

134. Before the degree of PhD is conferred, the student must present to the Research Office an electronic copy of the thesis, including any non-textual element, e.g. sound or image files which constitute part of the submission, for lodging in the College's digital repository and with the British Library, for them to make available online via ETOS. The following copyright statement should be included in each thesis: 'This text represents the submission for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the Royal College of Art. This copy has been supplied for the purpose of research for private study, on the understanding that it is copyright material, and that no quotation from the thesis may be published without proper acknowledgement'.

HIGHER DOCTORATE

Standard of Award

135. The standard of the award of the Higher Doctorate is that expected of an applicant who is a leading authority in the field of study or practice concerned and has made an original and significant contribution over many years to the advancement or application of knowledge in that field. The higher doctorate awarded by the College is Doctor of the Royal College of Art (Dr (RCA)).
136. An applicant should make a submission in accordance with instructions issued by the Registrar. The actual submission may take the form of books, contributions to journals, patent specifications, reports, specifications and design studies and may also include other relevant evidence of original work. An applicant should state which part of the submission, if any, has been submitted for another academic award. The contents of a submission should be in English.
137. In addition to the copies of the work on which the application is based, the applicant should submit a statement of not more than 1,000 words setting out the applicant's view of the nature and significance of the work submitted and a full statement of the

extent of the applicant's contribution to any of the work submitted which involves joint authorship or other types of collaboration. The application will be referred to the ABCD which will advise whether a prima facie case for proceeding to a formal assessment of the submission has been established, taking any advice it deems appropriate.

Assessment

138. If satisfied that a prima facie case has been established, the ABCD will submit the application to two examiners each of whom will be asked to make an independent report. In the event of disagreement between the examiners, the ABCD may appoint a third examiner. All examiners shall be external and wholly independent of the College. The ABCD will make a recommendation to the Senate. If the Senate agrees to award the degree of Dr (RCA) a copy of the applicant's submission will be lodged in the Library.

*****ENDS*****