

## Writing up procedure for students registered on PhD, MPhil, MD(Res) and EngD programmes

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### 1. General Principles

- 1.1. This document outlines the College's procedure in respect of the arrangements for research students to write up their thesis following completion of their active research period<sup>1</sup> and minimum periods of registration as required by the programme regulations. This procedure applies to all students entering writing up status from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 onwards.
- 1.2. This procedure has been developed in accordance with Section 8 (*Writing Up*) of the current academic regulations for the award of MPhil and PhD. All academic regulations are available to view via the College's [Academic Governance](#) webpages.
- 1.3. Entry to the writing up period is subject to the criteria outlined in the College's regulations for PhD and MPhil candidates and set out in this procedure. Students confirmed as eligible to enter the writing up period will subsequently be referred to as having writing-up status.
- 1.4. The maximum writing up period for students registered as a full-time student at the College is 12 months from the date of entry to writing up status.
- 1.5. The maximum writing up period for students registered as a part-time student at the College is 24 months from the date of entry to writing up status.
- 1.6. The writing up allowance is subject to the College's regulations with respect to maximum thesis submission deadlines. The writing up period will terminate at the thesis submission deadline if this is earlier than the maximum writing up allowance. The thesis submission deadline is governed by the College's academic regulations<sup>2</sup> and is visible to students via the *Postgraduate Research Milestones* section of the *My Imperial* student portal.
- 1.7. Students will not be considered eligible for entry to the writing up period prior to satisfying the College's minimum registration requirements for the programme of study.

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<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of this procedure, the active research period refers to the standard period in which all experimental work (including laboratory work, data collection, field work etc.) is expected to be completed for the registered programme of study. Further details can be found in Appendix A of this procedure.

<sup>2</sup> Where variations to the College's standard milestone structure have been agreed (e.g., Centres for Doctoral Training programmes), the progression and submission requirements will be published in the relevant CDT programme handbook.

## 2. Entry to the Writing Up Period

- 2.1. To be considered eligible for entry to the writing up period, students must satisfy the criteria outlined in sections 2.3 – 2.4 of this procedure.
- 2.2. Research students yet to submit their thesis for examination by the end of the standard active research period are subject to a formal monitoring point to determine progress and eligibility to enter the writing up period. This formal monitoring point is known as a **Progress Review**.
- 2.3. To be considered eligible for entry to writing up, students must have successfully completed the progression milestone requirements for their registered programme of study. This includes both the Early-Stage Assessment and Late-Stage Review, where applicable.
- 2.4. To be considered eligible for entry to writing up, students must have completed all experimental work and collection of material relating to their thesis and be in a position to submit their thesis within their writing up allowance.
- 2.5. As part of the Progress Review, students will normally be expected to demonstrate that all experimental work and collection of material relating to their thesis will be complete within the standard active research period allocated for their programme of study.
- 2.6. A student who still has experimental or data collection work to perform at this stage cannot move in to writing up status. Students in this position will have their active research period extended and will be liable for full fees for the additional period. An extension to the active research period will **not** result in an extension to the thesis submission deadline; in such cases, the writing up allowance will be reduced, in accordance with point 1.6 of this procedure.
- 2.7. As part of the Progress Review, students should submit a timetable of remaining work for review, which must be recommended by the Main Supervisor and approved by the Director of Postgraduate Studies (or nominee), who will confirm that the Progress Review milestone has been completed.
- 2.8. The College requires submission of the thesis for examination no later than the thesis submission deadline set by the programme regulations and recorded in My Imperial. Any mitigating circumstances or perceived difficulties identified at the Progress Review point should be followed up as appropriate at this time. Students affected by circumstances beyond their control who need to seek an extension to the thesis submission deadline should refer to the College's [Guidelines for requesting an extension to the thesis deadline for PhD, MPhil, MD\(Res\) and EngD candidates](#).
- 2.9. In accordance with Section 8 of the academic regulations governing PhD and MPhil programmes, students may be considered eligible to enter writing up earlier than the scheduled Progress Review point, subject to completion of the

minimum registration requirement for their programme of study and the criteria outlined in point 2.3 – 2.4. Maximum writing up allowances confirmed in point 1.4 and 1.5 of this procedure still apply; in such cases the thesis submission deadline will be adjusted accordingly. Failure to submit by the new given deadline may lead to withdrawal from the programme.

- 2.10. Students in the writing up period will remain enrolled on their registered programme of study and must continue to re-enrol as required by the College until submission of the thesis for examination. Failure to re-enrol as required by the College may result in withdrawal from the programme.
- 2.11. Students in the writing up period will retain access to College facilities. However, students are not normally entitled to use laboratory facilities for primary research or experimental work during the writing up period, in accordance with point 2.4 of this procedure.
- 2.12. During the writing up period, students can expect minimal supervision to clarify minor points. However, supervisors are expected to support the development of the thesis by reviewing draft chapters and providing students with timely feedback. Further information on the student/supervisor partnership and expectations can be found in the College's [Mutual Expectations Student Supervisor Partnership](#) guidance documents.
- 2.13. International students sponsored on a student visa will continue to be considered eligible for sponsorship by the College for the duration of the writing up period. Students sponsored by the College must maintain regular contact with their supervisor/s. The minimum expectation for regular contact is a monthly in-person or virtual meeting, or email exchange, between candidate and supervisor/s regarding research and write-up progress. International students remaining in the UK on a student visa during their writing up period must also provide the College with accurate and up to date UK contact details (including telephone number/s) via My Imperial.

For further information and guidance on the impact of writing up status on visa eligibility, please liaise with the **International Student Support Office**.

- 2.14. In exceptional cases, students may wish to interrupt their studies during the writing up period. Students in the writing up period may apply for an interruption in accordance with the College's approved Interruption of Studies procedures. A period of interruption will not reduce the period of writing up but will 'stop the clock' on a student's enrolment on their registered programme. Before considering an interruption, funded students should check whether their sponsor will continue to pay their stipend during the period of interruption. For further information and guidance, students should visit the College's [Student Support Zone](#).
- 2.15. The Registry Assessment Records Team will monitor completion of the Progress Review milestone and action subsequent updates to the student's central College record in relation to writing up status, or extensions to the active research period.

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**Appendix A**

See below for a summary of the approved timelines for MPhil and PhD research programmes\*.

Students registered on MD(Res) and Doctor of Engineering (EngD) programmes should refer to the Academic Regulations for their registered programme of study for further details on minimum registration and submission deadline requirements.

<b>Programme of registration</b>	<b>Minimum period of registration</b>	<b>Standard active research period</b>	<b>Maximum writing up allowance</b>	<b>Maximum thesis submission deadline</b>
MPhil (full-time)	12 months	12 months	12 months	24 months
MPhil (part-time)	24 months	24 months	24 months	48 months
PhD (full-time)	24 months	36 months	12 months	48 months
PhD (part-time) – <i>students commencing from October 2021**</i>	48 months	72 months	24 months	96 months

\*Where variations to the College's standard milestone structure have been agreed (e.g., Centres for Doctoral Training programmes), the progression and submission requirements will be published in the relevant CDT programme handbook.

\*\*Students commencing on part-time PhD programmes prior to October 2021 are required to submit their thesis by the deadlines set out in the Academic Regulations at their point of entry on to the programme. Students considered under these regulations will be eligible for a maximum writing up period of 24 months, subject to writing up conditions set out in points 2.3 – 2.5 of this procedure.