1. **Introduction**

These guidelines provide potential applicants, candidates, and staff involved with the application and course of study with details of the arrangements for the award of PhD by prior publication/portfolio and should be read in conjunction with the general regulations for the University and the Academic Regulations for Research Degrees.

The PhD by prior publication/portfolio allows people who have not followed the traditional academic route towards a PhD to obtain academic recognition for having undertaken and produced research, and developed their research skills and subject knowledge to a doctoral level. This may include people entering higher education in mid-career, especially in practice-based disciplines.

The PhD by prior publication/portfolio differs from the ‘traditional’ PhD in that it is normally based upon research already undertaken before registration for the degree that has led to a number of coherent publications or a body of publicly-accessible creative outputs. Whereas a ‘traditional’ PhD requires students to receive training in research methodology and develop appropriate personal and interpersonal skills, for the PhD by prior publication/portfolio route such training would normally have been done prior to coming to Kingston and would be demonstrable through the research publications/outputs. The research skills obtained are therefore recognised and evaluated in retrospect and would be expected to be equivalent to a traditional PhD student who has reached the beginning of the writing-up stage.

2. **Eligibility**

The award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy by Publication/Portfolio shall be open to

a) all members of staff of Kingston University beyond the probationary period of employment who can demonstrate a record of publications or other public outputs of
research of appropriate quantity and quality and who do not already hold a doctoral degree in the same or cognate discipline or area of research

b) external applicants who can demonstrate a record of publications or other public outputs of research of appropriate quantity and quality to benefit from this form of doctoral study.

In both instances, the body of research outputs must:

a) demonstrate a quantity, quality and level of research equivalent to that of a traditional PhD student who has reached the beginning of the writing-up stage

b) be at least equal to the length or volume of a standard PhD thesis

c) provide evidence of the acquisition and utilisation of research skills equivalent to those of a traditional PhD student who has reached the beginning of the writing-up stage

The degree will be awarded on the basis of materials and submitted publications as described below and defined and formally recognised by the appropriate subject and disciplinary area.

In the event of any issues arising regarding eligibility, the proposal should be referred initially to the University Research Degrees Committee (URDC).

3. Registration

The following conditions will apply to the candidate’s registration:

a) Prior to formal registration, a prima facie stage must take place during which the following are considered: the suitability of the applicant; the quality of research publications/outputs; the ability of the university to provide appropriate supervision and resources in the chosen area

b) The maximum period of registration from the point of approval after the prima facie application will normally be one year

c) No less than two months’ notice of intention to submit material for a PhD by published work for examination should be given

d) The URDC can approve extensions to registration (up to one year on one occasion only) and suspension of registration (up to one year on one occasion only) with respect to mitigating circumstances.

4. Application procedures: the prima facie stage

Prior to registering for a PhD by prior publication/portfolio, candidates will be required to undergo a preliminary evaluation. This initial prima facie stage will be a ‘pre-admission’ element, with the objective of enabling the University to make a preliminary judgement as to
the quality and coherence of the publications or creative output to be submitted for assessment for a PhD by prior publication/portfolio, the likelihood of a submission which will meet the criteria for an award, and the ability of the relevant research area or School within the university to provide appropriate supervision and resources.

See also Appendix A: Guidance for prima facie sub-committee members for the PhD by prior publication/portfolio

The following application procedure should be followed

a) Prospective applicants should first of all contact the relevant Head of School mostly closely associated with their research area to discuss the possibility of undertaking the PhD by prior publication/portfolio. The initial discussion will consider the quality of the applicant’s research, their career and educational background, and the resources at the disposal of the University to support registration and successful completion.

b) If the Head of School wishes to support the application, a supervisor should be identified with whom the application should be discussed further and who will advise the applicant on the subsequent steps of the application procedure. Supervisors must have previously supervised a PhD student to completion. Where supervisors do not have such completions, a supervisory team must be formed which comprises at least one other member of academic staff who has PhD completions.

c) After consulting with the proposed supervisor the applicant should then submit the following documents to the Faculty Research Student Co-ordinator:

• The name of the proposed supervisor and the School/research area within which the PhD is to be located

• a full cv including all publications and research outputs

• a brief summary of the relevant publications and/or portfolio materials to be included in the final PhD submission*

• a statement of intent/outline of the introductory section (approximately 500-700 words). This should include the proposed title of the work and seek to contextualise the selected publications, demonstrate their coherence, and identify the contribution to the advancement of knowledge in the chosen area of research.

These documents will be submitted by the Faculty Research Student Co-ordinator to the Head of School, who will then produce a statement of support and return to the Faculty Research Student Co-ordinator who will submit the documentation to the next Faculty Research Degrees Committee (FRDC).

The FRDC will recommend one of the following:
i. There is a *prima facie* case for admission to the degree of PhD

ii. There is no *prima facie* case for admission to the degree of PhD at this stage but the panel would be willing to reconsider the application after revisions have been made

iii. There is a no *prima facie* case for admission to the degree of PhD

d) If approved by the FRDC, a permanent member of academic staff will be appointed by the faculty to act as supervisor. See section 6 below.

e) Only once the prima-facie stage has been completed may the standard postgraduate application form be completed and submitted to Applicant Services prior to registration. This form must be completed for formal registration to take place.

5. **The role of the Supervisor**

The nominated supervisor will act in a similar role to that of a supervisor for a standard PhD project, but with more emphasis on being a mentor to the candidate. They will act as a source of support and guidance during the preparation of the research material for examination and for administration of the examination process.

The supervisor will be a permanent member of staff with experience of supervising at least one doctoral student to successful completion, or part of a supervisory team that includes a member of staff with a completion at doctoral level.

The supervisor will:
- Guide the candidate in the final selection of publications for inclusion in the submission;
- Support and advise on the development of the introductory section;
- Guide the candidate in relation to the coherence of the body of work to be submitted;
- Advise the candidate in relation to any research training requirements, for example the Researcher Development session on having your viva;
- Make arrangements for the examination, including nomination of the examining team
- Support the candidate through the examination process.

6. **Requirements of the degree: the form of examination**

The award consists of two parts:

a) **substantial published work** (published texts or creative output) that must be in the public domain prior to submission for examination for the award. Note that:

   - The number of publications will depend on both the academic area and the type of publication included in the submission.
   - Such publications may include academic papers, chapters, monographs, books, scholarly editions of a text, technical reports, creative work in relevant areas, or other artefacts.
• Where the candidate is not the first author in co-authored papers and there is no published statement as to the contribution of each author, the extent of their contribution should be normally be certified by at least one co-author.
• Normally, the majority of the publications should have been published, but it will be possible to include some publications which are in press or which have been accepted for publication.
• Publications included in the submission for a PhD by Publication should not have been used in the submission for another research degree.
• Publications should demonstrate that the quality, extent and level of research undertaken is at least equivalent to that expected of a traditional PhD student who has reached the end of the writing-up stage.

b) an introductory section demonstrating that the published works contain unifying themes and comprise a coherent body of academic work that meets the requirements for the award of PhD. The introductory section should:

• set the published work or creative output in the context of existing literature and evaluate the contribution that the research makes to the advancement of the chosen subject or professional area
• stress the coherence of the publications, linking them to the methodology adopted
• demonstrate the acquisition and utilisation of appropriate research skills equivalent to those of a traditional PhD student who has reached the end of the writing-up stage
• include a section relating to the candidate’s research methodology. This is particularly relevant if detail regarding methodology is not included in the publications. The PhD is about rigour of research process as well as the originality of the outcomes
• in cases where the works are jointly authored by the applicant and other persons (see 4a above), the introductory section should also describe the roles played by those joint authors, and contain percentage estimates of the applicant’s input into each jointly authored work.
• be approximately 10,000 words in length.
7. **Examination procedures**

The regulations and procedures governing the examination for PhD theses also apply to PhD by prior publication/portfolio, except that the examiners’ recommendations are be limited to the following:

i. that the award of the degree of PhD should be made
ii. that the candidate be allowed to resubmit the portfolio with a revised introductory section by a specified date (normally within three months); or
iii. that the material submitted in the portfolio falls short of the requirements, and the degree should not be awarded

Please see the Postgraduate Researcher Handbook available on our website [https://www.kingston.ac.uk/research/research-degrees/](https://www.kingston.ac.uk/research/research-degrees/) for more details.

See also Appendix B: Guidance for Examiners of the PhD by prior publication/portfolio.

8. **Format of submission for examination**

A copy of the documents/materials for each examiner, plus if appropriate, a copy for the supervisor, should be submitted for examination, in a variety of formats according to their nature;

a) Where possible materials should be securely fixed in a hardback folder(s) or ring binder(s). In all circumstances the introductory section should at least be bound into a ring binder;

b) If normal binding of the materials is not possible then they should be submitted in a rigid box file(s);

c) Any non-print items (CD/DVD/video/film) should be of good quality to avoid excessive deterioration;

d) Where the submitted material is in a form that cannot be duplicated or readily stored (work of art, performance etc) an appropriate form of submission and/or alternate arrangements for examination shall be agreed by the URDC, before approval for submission is given.

Note that an electronic copy may be requested for use with plagiarism detection software.

9. **Final submission: binding PhDs by Publication/Portfolio**

a) The agreed final version of the research work should be presented and bound according to standard University guidelines. Alternatively, a clearly labelled box file may be used with the introductory section and abstract in a hard bound cover and any books/articles in perfect binding within this. The abstract of the work will be submitted to the British Library.
b) Maps, diagrams and other such materials should be presented in a clearly labelled and robust portfolio. Non-print items should be securely packaged and labelled. All these materials should be of good quality and able to withstand prolonged storage, without excessive deterioration.

c) Where, for any legitimate reason, it is not possible to comply with the above conditions, the form of the final submission of documents/materials must be agreed by the URDC before approval for examination is given.

* Examples of Materials acceptable for Publication Submission
Refereed articles/papers in journals  Conference proceedings
Monographs  Books
Chapters in books

Examples of Materials acceptable for Portfolio Submission (requires collection of evidence that documents and authenticates processes and outputs)
project reports  published books/chapters/articles/manuscripts
project materials  patents
software programs  surveys
maps  multimedia packages
feedback from project sponsors  design materials
conference papers  CD/DVD/video/film presentations
exhibitions/productions

University Research Degrees Committee,
July 2014

10.  Tuition Fees

Tuition fees for the PhD by prior publication/portfolio are as follows:

For applicants who are not currently staff of Kingston University, the fee is the same as the yearly full time home/EU or overseas PhD fee.

For current Kingston University staff, subject to agreement by the employing faculty, the annual fee is £750.
Appendix A: Guidance for *prima facie* admission for the PhD by prior publication/portfolio

These guidance notes should be read in conjunction with the general regulations for the University, the Academic Regulations for Research Degrees and the Guidelines for PhD by prior publication/portfolio.

By recommending that the there is a *prima facie* case for admission, the FRDC are confirming that there is evidence that the candidate:

- Meets the entry criteria
- Has the required supporting statements
- Has a substantial body of work and skills that can be considered to be the equivalent of a traditional PhD at the beginning of the writing-up process
- Is likely to meet the required standard for a PhD
- Includes evidence of a unifying theme across the publications/outputs
- Includes evidence of originality
- Includes evidence of research skills equivalent to those expected of a traditional PhD student in the relevant discipline
- Has proposed a suitable PhD title
- Has identified a suitable supervisor

The FRDC should recommend one of the following:

i. There is a *prima facie* case for admission to the degree of PhD
ii. There is no *prima facie* case for admission to the degree of PhD at this stage but the panel would be willing to reconsider the application after revisions have been made
iii. There is a no *prima facie* case for admission to the degree of PhD

University Research Degrees Committee
Appendix B: Guidance for Examiners of the PhD by prior publication/portfolio

These guidelines are designed to help examiners, particularly those who may have no prior experience of assessing PhDs by publication/portfolio, by alerting them to some of the special issues which may arise. They may also act as further information for applicants, registered students and supervisors regarding the criteria for assessment. They should be read in conjunction with the following information provided to examiners for the ‘traditional’ PhD route:

- Guidance Notes Relating to the Examination of Candidates for Research Degrees at Kingston University
- Academic Regulations for Research Degrees
- Criteria for Assessment

The points below are an extract from the 2004 UKCGE report ‘The Award of PhD by Published Work in the UK’ by Stuart Powell*.

The examiners’ main tasks may be interpreted as to:

- evaluate the intellectual merit of the candidate’s cited published and/or creative work;
- establish if a satisfactory case is made for coherence between the publications/outputs;
- assess the contribution to knowledge represented by the publications/portfolio and made apparent in any critical appraisal;
- evaluate the rigour with which the candidate has contextualised and analysed his/her publications/portfolio in any critical appraisal;
- evaluate the appropriateness of the methods employed in the research and the correctness of their application;
- assess the candidate’s contribution to the various phases of the research embodied in multi-authored works;
- establish the candidate’s ‘ownership’ of the published work and appreciation of the state of [historical and current] knowledge within the candidate’s research area;
- assess the candidate’s research skills in terms of his/her potential as a continuing, independent researcher.

To note:

Due to constraints imposed by publishers, published work may contain less detail than a traditional thesis. There may be instances where the evidence available to the examiner about the quality of the work and the raw data on which important conclusions are based is minimal or even absent. Whilst to some extent this should have been addressed in the introductory section, the oral examination should be used as an opportunity to question the candidate on how conclusions were reached.

Extract from the Kingston University Academic Regulations for Research Degrees: DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY by submission of a portfolio of published works:

10 The regulations governing examination of PhD theses shall apply to the examination of the portfolio, except that the examiners’ recommendations shall be limited to those in paragraph 11.
11 Following the examination (including any oral examination), the examiners must make a joint recommendation of either:
   i. that the award of the degree of PhD should be made
   ii. that the candidate be allowed to resubmit the portfolio with a revised introductory section; or**
   iii. that the material submitted in the portfolio falls short of the requirements, and the degree should not be awarded

12 In the case of recommendation 11 ii, the candidate must be provided with written guidance, using the standard form supplied by the Graduate Research School or Faculty Research Student Co-ordinator, on the additional material required and/or corrections to be made to the introductory section. In the case of recommendation 11 iii, the candidate will be informed that no further submission of this portfolio will be accepted for consideration for the award of PhD.

*UK Council for Graduate Education (2004), The Award of PhD by Published Work in the UK, Stuart Powell, Lichfield, UKCGE (ISBN 0-9543915-2-7)

**amendments should be submitted within 3 months of notification

University Research Degrees Committee