

1. INTRODUCTION

This guideline is provided as a reference in conducting candidature seminars for academic staff and administrators of the Responsibility Centre (RC) offering post graduate programmes.

2. OBJECTIVE

This guideline is intended to:

- (1) Serve as a reference for the method of conducting candidature seminars for RCs to ensure that the progress of a candidate's research is at a satisfactory level,
- (2) establish uniformity and alignment in the process of conducting candidature seminars among RCs so that the seminars are carried out effectively; and
- (3) guarantee the quality of academic programmes

3. SCOPE

This guideline applies to all full-time and part-time Doctoral and Master's degree programmes by research mode, mixed mode, course work, and clinical work required for candidature seminars.

The candidature seminar consists of the following:

- (a) Proposal Defence
- (b) Confirmation Defence
- (c) Candidature Defence
- (d) Thesis Seminar

4. RESPONSIBILITY

The Head of the RC is responsible for ensuring that this procedure is followed during the conduct of the candidature seminars.

Anyone involved in the conduct of the candidature seminar must adhere to this procedure.

5. REFERENCES

- (1) University of Malaya Academic Program Management Policy (latest version)
- (2) Methods and Regulations of the Universiti Malaya (Master's degree) (latest version)
- (3) Methods and Regulations of the Universiti Malaya (Doctoral Degree) (latest version)

6. LIST OF WORDS

- (1) Definition

The conduct of a candidature seminar refers to the periodic monitoring process of a candidate's research progress (for example, through progress reports or presentation of research proposals) to evaluate their knowledge, critical thinking, practical, technical, professional, scientific, and problem-solving skills. The candidate's evaluation process is carried out by a Panel of Assessors appointed by the RC.

- (2) Abbreviation

FT	Full time
PT	Part time
RC	Responsibility Centre

7. CONDUCTING CANDIDATURE SEMINARS

- (1) Initial Preparation of RC

To ensure that the management of the candidature seminars at each RC is efficient and smooth, the RC administration must ensure the following are implemented:

- setting a candidature seminar date based on the research progress status of each candidate;
- confirmation of the candidate's Supervisor for conducting the candidature seminar;
- appointment of the Panel of Assessors;
- distribution of candidature seminar notice (including information for conducting the seminar physically or online); and
- receipt of presentation slides and related reports from candidates.

The planning of the candidature seminar can be based on the overall summary of the candidature seminar schedule according to the level of study as shown in Appendix 1.

- (2) The conduct of each candidature seminar is as follows:

(a) PROPOSAL DEFENCE

- (i) Presentation Period - Planning of the Proposal Defence presentation for full-time and part-time Masters degree candidates is as stated in Attachment A and B. For full-time and part-time Doctoral studies candidates, refer to Attachment C and D.
- (ii) Submission of the Research Proposal Report

Candidates are required to submit four (4) copies of complete research proposal report consisting of 3000-7000 words to the Department/Postgraduate Office of the RC no later than two (2) weeks before the date of the presentation, which includes the following:

- (A) abstract (500 words in *Bahasa Melayu* and English);
- (B) introduction, statement of problem and scope of research;
- (C) research objective;
- (D) summary of literature review;
- (E) description of conceptual framework or summary of experimental methods or summary of research design and required equipment;
- (F) importance and relevance of study;
- (G) *preliminary findings / pilot test* (initial findings, if any)
- (H) proposed work schedule based on the designated date of submission of thesis/dissertation; and
- (I) brief bibliography.

(b) CONFIRMATION DEFENCE (for direct admission / Fast Track students)

- (i) Presentation Period - Planning for the Confirmation Defence for full time and part time Doctoral by research programme candidates is as stated in Attachment E and F.
- (ii) Submission of Confirmed Proposed Research Report

Candidates are required to submit four (4) copies of complete research proposal report consisting of 4,000-7000 words to the Department/Postgraduate Office of the RC no later than two (2) weeks before the date of the presentation, which includes the following:

- (A) abstract (500 words in *Bahasa Melayu* and English);
- (B) introduction, statement of problem and scope of research;
- (C) research objective;
- (D) complete literature review;
- (E) solid research methodology;

- (F) importance and relevance of study;
- (G) preliminary findings / pilot test (if any);
- (H) proposed work schedule based on the designated date of submission of thesis/dissertation; and
- (I) brief bibliography.

(c) CANDIDATURE DEFENCE

- (i) Presentation Period - Planning for the Candidature Defence for full time and part time Masters programme candidates is as stated in Attachment A and B, whereas for the full time and part time Doctoral programme candidates, it is as stated in Attachment C and D.
- (i) Submission of Research Progress Report

Candidates are required to submit four (4) copies of a complete research progress report consisting of 5,000-10000 words to the Department/Postgraduate Office of the RC according to the works schedule and procedures specified by the University, which includes the following:

- (A) abstract (500 words in *Bahasa Melayu* and English);
- (B) objective and problem statement;
- (C) importance and relevance of the study;
- (D) brief and concise literature review;
- (E) solid research methodology;
- (F) research findings that have been obtained to this point;
- (G) brief and concise bibliography;
- (H) research plan that will lead to the submission of the dissertation/thesis on the designated date; and
- (I) list of publications or conference papers presented during the candidature period.

(d) THESIS SEMINAR

- (i) Presentation Period - Planning for the Thesis Seminar for full time and part time Doctoral programme candidates is as stated in Attachment C and D.
- (ii) Submission of Thesis Summary

Candidates are required to submit presentation notes with abstract to the Department/Postgraduate Office of the RC no later than three (3) working days before the date of the presentation.

8. CANDIDATURE SEMINAR PRESENTATION ASSESSMENT

(1) Membership of Panel of Assessors for all candidature seminars, except Thesis Seminar, is as follows:

- (a) Deputy Dean (Postgraduate) / Head of Department / Academic Staff appointed by RC as Chairperson.
- (b) At least two (2) panel members comprising of academic staff from within or outside the Department /Faculty/University related to the candidate's field of research.
- (c) The quorum for the panel of assessors must be at least three (3) members including the Chairman.
- (d) The panel shall have a minimum qualification equivalent to the degree being pursued by the candidate.
- (e) At least one of the candidate's Supervisors must attend the candidature seminar presentation.

(2) Appointment criteria for Panel of Assessors for a Thesis Seminar is as follows:

- (a) Deputy Dean (Postgraduate)/Head of Department / Academic staff as Chairperson.
- (b) Panel members should have a minimum qualification equivalent to the degree being pursued by the candidate.
- (c) Panel members should have research skills and experience aligned with the candidate's research field.

(3) Presentation Assessment

The appointed panel shall evaluate the following two (2) aspects using the form prescribed by the University.

- (a) proposal report / confirmation / progress of research; and
- (b) presentation of candidate during the candidature seminars.

However, the appointed Chairperson shall evaluate the candidates using the Panel Evaluation form only.

- (4) The presentation slide must be submitted by the candidate to the Department / Postgraduate Office of the RC within three (3) working days prior to the presentation date.
- (5) The seminar presentation before the Panel of Assessors should not exceed 45 minutes, including the question-and-answer session.
- (6) Based on the evaluation results of the candidate and the confirmation of the Chairperson, in certain circumstances, the candidate may receive a downgrade decision from the Doctoral level to the Master's level after undergoing Confirmation Defence (Fast Track candidate) and failing the assessment.

Note: For items 8(1) and (2), the appointment of the same Panel of Assessors is strongly encouraged for a postgraduate candidate to ensure that the feedback and follow-up actions taken by the candidate are consistent with the suggested improvements provided by the Panel of Assessors. This continuity aims to guide the candidate throughout the course until graduation.

9. CONCLUSION

These guidelines are provided as reference for academic staff and the RC Administrators regarding the process of managing the presentation of a postgraduate candidature seminar. They aim to ensure quality and the alignment of processes in each RC. These guidelines should be read in conjunction with the Universiti Malaya (Doctoral Degree) Rules and Regulations (latest version) and the Universiti Malaya (Masters Degree) Rules and Regulations (latest version).

These guidelines are subject to amendments from time to time.

Amended by the Senate on 23.11.2023.

APPENDIX 1

SUMMARY OF CANDIDATURE SEMINAR PERIOD FOR FULL -TIME (FT) & PART -TIME (PT) DOCTORAL DEGREE PROGRAMME CANDIDATES

Candidature Seminar	Classification of Doctoral Degree Programme							
	Research Mode		Mixed Mode		Coursework		Clinical	
	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT
<i>Proposal Defence</i>	Sem. 2	Sem. 3	Sem. 3	Sem. 4	Sem. 3*	Sem 4	Sem. 3*	Sem 4
<i>PhD Confirmation Defence (Direct Admission)</i>	Sem. 2	Sem. 4	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<i>Candidature Defence</i>	Sem. 5	Sem. 6	Sem. 5	Sem 6	Sem. 5	Sem 6	Sem. 5	Sem 6
Thesis Seminar	Sem. 6#	Sem. 7#	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Nota: * - first semester candidate registers for research component

- can be implemented before or after the submission of the thesis for examination.

N/A – Not Applicable

SUMMARY OF CANDIDATURE SEMINAR PERIOD FOR FULL -TIME (FT) & PART -TIME (PT) MASTERS DEGREE PROGRAMME CANDIDATES

Candidature Seminar	Classification of Masters Degree Programme			
	Research Mode		Mixed Mode	
	FT	PT	FT	PT
<i>Proposal Defence</i>	Sem. 2	Sem 3	Sem. 2	Sem 3
<i>Conversion Seminar+</i>	Sem. 3	N/A	N/A	N/A
<i>Candidature Defence</i>	Sem. 3	Sem 4	Sem. 3	Sem 4

Nota: + The next candidature seminar is the *Candidature Defence*.

Graduate on Time Schedule – Full Time Candidate
Major Administrative and Regulatory Milestones for Master's Programme

Sem.	Activities	Programme of Study		Output/Milestone
		Research	Mixed Mode	
1	Register for Research Methodology Course and other courses as in SPI*	√	√	- Complete Research Methodology course - Fulfil language requirements - Present Research Proposal
	Attend Bahasa Melayu course**	√	√	
	Attend English language course***	√	√	
	Conduct Literature Review	√	√	
	Preparation for Proposal Defence	√	√	
2	Attend Upskill program by Faculty - familiarization with use of reference management software, Turnitin, editing software, data analysis and research tools	√	√	- Literature Review - Dissertation Plan/Outline of Dissertation - Submission of publication+
	Register for courses as in SPI	NA	√	
	Expand research proposal to drafts of chapter 1 - 3	√	√	
	Complete Literature Review	√	√	
	Experimentation and data analysis	√	√	
	Present Proposal Defence	√	√	
	Prepare for Candidature Defence	√	√	
	Preparation of manuscripts for submission of publication	√	NA	
3	Attend upskill program by Faculty	√	√	Complete dissertation draft
	Finalise data analysis	√	√	
	Present Candidature Defence	√	√	
	Complete dissertation write-up for remaining chapters	√	√	
4	Submit notice to Supervisor for dissertation submission	√	√	Submission of dissertation
	Finalize dissertation	√	√	
4	Submit dissertation	√	√	

Notes:

- * *SPI refers to Structure of Programme of Study.*
- ** *Applicable to all international candidates.*
- *** *Applicable to international candidates who are writing their theses in languages other than English.*
- + *Refer to publication requirement by programme of study (Science and non-Science).*

Graduate on Time Schedule – Part-time Candidate
Major Administrative and Regulatory Milestones for Master's Programme

Sem.	Activities	Programme of Study		Output/Milestone
		Research	Mixed Mode	
1	Register for Research Methodology Course and other courses as in SPI*	✓	✓	- Complete Research Methodology course - Fulfil language requirements - Present Research Proposal
	Attend Bahasa Melayu course**	✓	✓	
	Attend English language course***	✓	✓	
	Conduct Literature Review	✓	✓	
2	Attend Upskill program by Faculty - familiarization with use of reference management software, Turnitin, editing software, data analysis and research tools	✓	✓	Literature Review
	Register for courses as in SPI	NA	✓	
	Expand research proposal as Chapter 1 draft	✓	✓	
	Complete Literature Review	✓	✓	
	Conduct pilot study/ planning & setting up of experiment/ start data collection	✓	✓	
	Preparation for Proposal Defence	✓	✓	
3	Attend upskill program by Faculty	✓	✓	Complete draft of three chapters
	Register for courses as in SPI	✓	✓	
	Experimentation and data analysis	NA	✓	
	Dissertation write-up (chapter 1 - 3)	✓	✓	
	Present Proposal Defence	✓	✓	
	Preparation for Candidature Defence	✓	✓	
4	Attend upskill program by Faculty	✓	✓	- Dissertation Plan/Outline of Dissertation - Submission of publication+
	Finalise data analysis	✓	✓	
	Present Candidature Defence	✓	✓	
	Preparation of manuscripts for submission of publication	✓	NA	

Sem.	Activities	Programme of Study		Output/Milestone
		Research	Mixed Mode	
5	Complete dissertation write-up for remaining chapters	√	√	• Complete dissertation draft
	Submit notice to Supervisor for dissertation submission			
6	Finalize dissertation	√	√	• Submission of dissertation
	Submit dissertation			

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Graduate on Time Schedule - Full Time Candidate
Major Administrative and Regulatory Milestones for Doctoral Programme
(Research, Mixed Mode, Coursework and Clinical)

Sem.	Activities	Programme of Study				Output/Milestone
		Research	Mixed Mode	Coursework	Clinical	
1	Register for Research Methodology Course and other courses as in SPI*	✓	✓	✓	✓	- Complete Research Methodology course - Fulfil language requirements - Present Research Proposal
	Attend Bahasa Melayu course**	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Attend English language course***					
	Attend Upskill program by Faculty - familiarization with use of reference management software, Turnitin, editing software, data analysis and research tools	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Conduct Literature Review	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Preparation for Proposal Defence	✓	NA	NA	NA	
2	Extend Introduction section in proposal as Chapter 1 draft	✓	✓	✓	✓	- Literature Review - Thesis/Dissertation Plan/Outline of Thesis/Dissertation
	Complete Literature Review	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Conduct pilot study/ planning & setting up of experiment/ start data collection	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Preparation for Proposal Defence	NA	✓	✓	✓	
	Present Proposal Defence	✓	NA	NA	NA	
	Attend upskill program by Faculty	✓	✓	✓	✓	
3	Investigation and development of the proposed solutions	✓	✓	✓	✓	Submission of first publication+
	Data analysis	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Present Proposal Defence	NA	✓	#	#	
	Preparation of manuscripts for submission of Publication	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Attend upskill program by Faculty	✓	✓	✓	✓	
4	Experimentation and/or data analysis	✓	✓	✓	✓	- Submission of second publication+ - Complete drafts of three
	Thesis/Dissertation write-up (Chapter 1 - 3)	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Preparation for Candidature Defence	✓	✓	✓	✓	

Sem.	Activities	Programme of Study				Output/Milestone
		Research	Mixed Mode	Coursework	Clinical	
	Preparation of manuscripts for submission of Publication	✓	NA	NA	NA	chapters
	Attend upskill program by Faculty	✓	✓	✓	✓	
5	Complete thesis/dissertation write-up for remaining chapters	✓	✓	✓	✓	• Complete thesis/dissertation draft
	Present Candidature Defence	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Submit notice to Supervisor for thesis / dissertation submission	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Preparation for Thesis Seminar	✓	NA	NA	NA	
6	Present Thesis Seminar	✓	NA	NA	NA	• Submission of thesis/dissertation • Complete viva voce
	Finalize and submit thesis/dissertation	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Preparation for viva voce	✓	✓	✓	✓	

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+ Refer to publication requirement by programme of study (Science and non-Science).

Coursework and clinical candidates are required to present the Proposal Defence in the first semester of their research component.

Graduate on Time Schedule - Part-time Candidate
Major Administrative and Regulatory Milestones for Doctoral Programme
(Research, Mixed Mode, Coursework and Clinical)

Sem.	Activities	Programme of Study				Output/Milestone
		Research	Mixed Mode	Coursework	Clinical	
1	Register for Research Methodology Course and other courses as in SPI*	✓	✓	✓	✓	- Complete Research Methodology course - Fulfil language requirements - Present Research Proposal
	Attend Bahasa Melayu course**	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Attend English language course***	✓	✓	✓	✓	
2	Attend Upskill program by Faculty - familiarization with use of reference management software, Turnitin, editing software, data analysis and research tools	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Conduct Literature Review	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Preparation for Proposal Defence	✓	NA	NA	NA	
3	Attend upskill program by Faculty	✓	✓	✓	✓	- Literature Review - Thesis/Dissertation Plan/Outline of Thesis/Dissertation
	Extend Introduction section in proposal as Chapter 1 draft	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Complete Literature Review	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Conduct pilot study/ planning & setting up of experiment/ start data collection	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Preparation for Proposal Defence	NA	✓	✓	✓	
	Present Proposal Defence	✓	NA	NA	NA	
4	Attend upskill program by Faculty	✓	✓	✓	✓	Submission of first publication+
	Investigation and development of the proposed solutions	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Data analysis	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Present Proposal Defence	NA	✓	✓	✓	
	Preparation of manuscripts for submission of publication	✓	✓	✓	✓	
5	Attend upskill program by Faculty	✓	✓	✓	✓	Complete drafts of three chapters
	Experimentation and/or data analysis	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Thesis/Dissertation write-up (Chapter 1 - 3)	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Preparation for Candidature Defence	✓	✓	✓	✓	

Sem.	Activities	Programme of Study				Output/Milestone
		Research	Mixed Mode	Coursework	Clinical	
	Complete thesis/dissertation write-up for remaining chapters	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Attend upskill program by Faculty	✓	✓	✓	✓	
6	Present Candidature Defence	✓	✓	✓	✓	• Submission of second publication+
	Complete thesis/dissertation write-up for remaining chapters	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Preparation of manuscripts for submission of publication	✓	NA	NA	NA	
	Attend upskill program by Faculty	✓	✓	✓	✓	
7	Submit notice to Supervisor for thesis submission	✓	✓	NA	NA	• Complete thesis/dissertation draft
	Preparation for Thesis Seminar	✓	NA	NA	NA	
	Present Thesis Seminar	✓	NA	NA	NA	
8	Submit notice to Supervisor for dissertation submission	NA	NA	✓	✓	• Submission of thesis/dissertation • Complete viva voce
	Finalize and submit thesis/dissertation	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Preparation for viva voce	✓	✓	✓	✓	

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*** Applicable to international candidates who are writing their theses in languages other than English.

+ Refer to publication requirement by programme of study (Science and non-Science).

Coursework and clinical candidates are required to present the Proposal Defence in the first semester of their research component.

Graduate on Time Schedule - Full Time Candidate (Direct Admission)
Major Administrative and Regulatory Milestones for Doctoral by Research

Sem.	Activities	Output/Milestone
1	<i>Register for Research Methodology Course and other courses as in SPI*</i>	• Complete Research Methodology course • Fulfil language requirements • Present Research Proposal
	<i>Attend Bahasa Melayu course**</i>	
	<i>Attend English language course***</i>	
	<i>Conduct Literature Review</i>	
2	<i>Attend Upskill program by Faculty - familiarization with use of reference management software, Turnitin, editing software, data analysis and research tools</i>	• Literature Review • Thesis Plan/Outline of Thesis
	<i>Extend Introduction section in proposal as Chapter 1 draft</i>	
	<i>Complete Literature Review</i>	
	<i>Preparation for Proposal Defence</i>	
	<i>Conduct pilot study/ planning & setting up of experiment/ start data collection</i>	
	<i>Preparation for Proposal Defence</i>	
	<i>Present Proposal Defence</i>	
	<i>Prepare for PhD Confirmation Defence</i>	
3	<i>Attend upskill program by Faculty</i>	• Submission of first publication+
	<i>Investigation and development of the proposed solutions</i>	
	<i>Data analysis</i>	
	<i>Present PhD Confirmation Defence#</i>	
	<i>Preparation of manuscripts for submission of Publication</i>	
4	<i>Attend upskill program by Faculty</i>	• Submission of second publication+ • Complete drafts of three chapters
	<i>Experimentation and/or data analysis</i>	
	<i>Thesis write-up (Chapter 1 - 3)</i>	
	<i>Preparation for Candidature Defence</i>	
	<i>Preparation of manuscripts for submission of Publication</i>	
5	<i>Attend upskill program by Faculty</i>	• Complete thesis draft
	<i>Complete thesis write-up for remaining chapters</i>	
	<i>Present Candidature Defence</i>	
	<i>Submit notice to Supervisor for thesis submission</i>	
6	<i>Preparation for Thesis Seminar</i>	• Submission of thesis • Complete viva voce
	<i>Present Thesis Seminar</i>	
	<i>Finalize and submit thesis</i>	
	<i>Preparation for viva voce</i>	

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- + *Refer to publication requirement by programme of study (Science and non-Science).*
- # *Candidates who do not perform satisfactorily in the PhD Confirmation Defence shall register for Master's by Research programme in the subsequent semester.
Candidates who perform satisfactorily in the PhD Confirmation Defence shall continue with the Doctoral by Research programme.*

Graduate on Time Schedule - Part-time Candidate (Direct Admission)
Major Administrative and Regulatory Milestones for Doctoral by Research

Sem.	Activities	Output/Milestone
1	<i>Register for Research Methodology Course and other courses as in SPI*</i>	• Complete Research Methodology course • Fulfil language requirements • Present Research Proposal
	<i>Attend Bahasa Melayu course**</i>	
	<i>Attend English language course***</i>	
2	<i>Attend Upskill program by Faculty - familiarization with use of reference management software, Turnitin, editing software, data analysis and research tools</i>	• Literature Review
	<i>Conduct Literature Review</i>	
	<i>Preparation for Proposal Defence</i>	
3	<i>Attend upskill program by Faculty</i>	
	<i>Extend Introduction section in proposal as Chapter 1 draft</i>	
	<i>Complete Literature Review</i>	
	<i>Conduct pilot study/ planning & setting up of experiment/ start data collection</i>	
	<i>Present Proposal Defence</i>	
	<i>Prepare for PhD Confirmation Defence</i>	
4	<i>Attend upskill program by Faculty</i>	• Submission of first publication+
	<i>Investigation and development of the proposed solutions</i>	
	<i>Data analysis</i>	
	<i>Present PhD Confirmation Defence#</i>	
	<i>Preparation of manuscripts for submission of Publication</i>	
5	<i>Attend upskill program by Faculty</i>	• Complete drafts of three chapters
	<i>Experimentation and/or data analysis</i>	
	<i>Thesis write-up (Chapter 1 - 3)</i>	
	<i>Preparation for Candidature Defence</i>	
6	<i>Attend upskill program by Faculty</i>	• Complete thesis draft • Submission of second publication+
	<i>Complete thesis write-up for remaining chapters</i>	
	<i>Present Candidature Defence</i>	
	<i>Preparation of manuscripts for submission of Publication</i>	
7	<i>Attend upskill program by Faculty</i>	• Complete thesis draft
	<i>Complete thesis write-up for remaining chapters</i>	
	<i>Submit notice to Supervisor for thesis submission</i>	
	<i>Preparation for Thesis Seminar</i>	
	<i>Present Thesis Seminar</i>	

Sem.	Activities	Output/Milestone
8	<i>Finalize and submit thesis</i>	• <i>Submission of thesis</i>
	<i>Preparation for viva voce</i>	• <i>Complete viva voce</i>

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Candidates who do not perform satisfactorily in the PhD Confirmation Defence shall register for Master's by Research programme in the subsequent semester.
Candidates who perform satisfactorily in the PhD Confirmation Defence shall continue with the Doctoral by Research programme.