

Key Changes to Postgraduate Degree Regulations 2026/27

Links within the regulations to other information have been updated as necessary.

Regulation Updated	What has changed
16 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)	Removal of RPL where an exit award is made RPL is limited to one-third of the total credits for the award for which a student is applying. However, where a student exits a programme with a lesser award, the RPL could constitute as much as 100% of the credit for the exit award, for example where a student is awarded 60 credits RPL for a Masters programme, but exits with a Certificate. This means that a student is being awarded a qualification largely or entirely based on credit that has already been counted towards a different award. The amendment states that previously-awarded RPL may be removed in order to comply with the “one-third” rule, where a student leaves with an exit award. Colleges can allow exemptions to the “one-third” rule where the RPL has been awarded for UoE credit which did not lead to an award previously, for example credit gained as part of Continuous or Postgraduate Professional Development. RPL for courses on a Degree Programme Table Students may take individual courses at the University as Postgraduate Professional Development (PPD) or Continuous Professional Development (CPD), and subsequently seek to use the credit for these courses as part of a programme of study. The amendment to the regulation states that, where a student is given RPL for a course or courses taken previously which are on the Degree Programme Table for the programme they are joining, the mark(s) for the course(s) will be used for progression and award decisions on the new programme. This is line with the approach taken for students returning to undertake a Diploma or Masters after completing a Certificate or Diploma, under PG DRPS 60.
33 Authorised Interruption of Study	Amended to remove content duplicated from the Authorised Interruption of Study Policy and instead refer to that Policy for more information. This removes existing misalignment between the wording of the

	Regulation and the Policy (for example regarding retrospective approval of interruptions) and prevents this recurring. The Regulation retains content regarding exceptions to the rule that the total permitted period of interruption will not exceed 100% of the prescribed period of full-time study, which is referred to but not covered in the Policy.
45 Request for Reinstatement on Doctoral and MPhil degrees	Amended to extend provision for former students to request reinstatement where they have been excluded due to debt, non-matriculation, or lack of visa permission. Like students who have withdrawn voluntarily, students readmitted after exclusion for these reasons will be offered the time they had remaining on their programme at the point of exclusion to complete their thesis. Self-funding students in particular face increasing challenges with the affordability of study, so it will be of benefit to provide explicit reassurance that students excluded due to debt can seek readmission once their debt is settled. This benefit will be particularly relevant for students from lower-income backgrounds. Students requiring a visa to study can also face challenges securing or maintaining the appropriate visa through no fault of their own. Providing a route to readmission following exclusion due to lack of visa permission is therefore a significant benefit to international students. There are situations where students fail to matriculate at the appropriate time due to serious health or personal issues, and they do not respond to contact before the exclusion process is completed. Providing an explicit route to seek readmission in these circumstances will therefore be of significant benefit to these students. The regulation states that the decision as to whether to readmit a student remains at the College's discretion, and provides information regarding factors to be considered when assessing applications. This provides effective mitigation against the risk that a student may be readmitted where this would not be appropriate or feasible, and serves to manage students' expectations regarding the process of readmission.

48 PhD Thesis Length – Word Count	Amended to state that image captions are not included in the word count for PhD or MPhil theses.
51 MPhil by Research	This will encourage the provision of detailed captions, where appropriate, which will be of particular benefit to blind or partially-sighted readers of a thesis.
Changes to Degree Specific Regulations	
68 PhD – Submission by Portfolio in Art, Design and Landscape Architecture	a. Amended to include examples of what might constitute a permanent record for the portfolio of artefacts, using existing text from Regulation 80; b. Amended to refer to Regulation 48 regarding inclusions and exclusions from the word count, for consistency with other doctoral degrees; c. New content added regarding separate submission of the portfolio and thesis for some programmes.
69 MPhil - Submission by Portfolio in Art, Design and Landscape Architecture	a. Amended in line with Regulation 68. b. Amended in line with Regulation 68.
72 Master of Chinese Studies 76 MSc in Middle Eastern Studies with Arabic 78 MSc in Architectural Project Management 79 MSc in Advanced Sustainable Design (mixed mode)	These regulations are to be removed as these programmes are closing and have no students currently taking them. Subsequent regulation numbers will be amended.
80 PhD in Creative Music Practice	a. Amended to refer to Regulation 48 regarding inclusions and exclusions from the word count, for consistency with other doctoral degrees.
82 PhD in Architecture by Design	Amended to provide more information and consistency of format with other ECA doctoral degrees.