Table of Contents

Admissions .................................................................................................................. 3
Initial enquiries ............................................................................................................. 3
Documentation required ............................................................................................. 3
Admissions procedure ................................................................................................. 3

Supervision ................................................................................................................... 4
College regulations ....................................................................................................... 4
School practices .......................................................................................................... 5

Funding .......................................................................................................................... 5

Structured PhD requirements .......................................................................................... 7
Procedures for satisfying structured PhD requirements ............................................. 7

Progress reports .......................................................................................................... 8
First progress report ..................................................................................................... 8
Progress report procedure ........................................................................................... 9

Confirmation .................................................................................................................. 9
Confirmation report ....................................................................................................... 10
Confirmation procedure ............................................................................................... 10
Confirmation outcome ................................................................................................. 11

Viva examination ......................................................................................................... 12
Appointment of examiners ......................................................................................... 12
Viva logistics ................................................................................................................ 13
Viva procedure ............................................................................................................. 13
Results .......................................................................................................................... 13

MLitt procedures ......................................................................................................... 14
MLitt to PhD transfer .................................................................................................... 14
Examination of MLitt thesis ....................................................................................... 14

Appendices ................................................................................................................... 15
Appendix A – PhD application assessment .................................................................. 15
Appendix B – Admissions report ................................................................................ 16
Appendix C – Progress report ..................................................................................... 17
Appendix D – Confirmation cover sheet ...................................................................... 19
Appendix E – Confirmation interview report ............................................................... 20
Appendix F – School appeals board ............................................................................ 22
Admissions

Initial enquiries

The School of English website contains a guide for all prospective PhD students ([https://www.tcd.ie/English/postgraduate/research-students/](https://www.tcd.ie/English/postgraduate/research-students/)). Applicants should be directed there in the first instance and to the DTLPG for any more specific questions. The Graduate Studies Office website also contains some useful information ([http://www.tcd.ie/Graduate_Studies/](http://www.tcd.ie/Graduate_Studies/)).

Documentation required

The following (scanned) documentation must be submitted through the admissions website before the School can assess a PhD application: academic transcripts; degree certificates; cv; two academic references; proof of English language competence (for applicants whose first language is not English and who have not been educated through the medium of English); research proposal; and, a writing sample (c. 5000 words).

Ideally, the research proposal should be developed in consultation with an appropriate member of staff. Nonetheless, staff should make it clear to the applicant that while the agreement to help develop a research proposal may constitute an ‘agreement in principle’ to supervise, all applications are subject to approval by the School Admissions & Funding Panel.

Admissions procedure

The DTLPG will convene a School Admissions & Funding Panel at the beginning of each academic year. The panel will also have responsibility for the allocation of School/Faculty funding and nominations for College funding (i.e. Ussher awards). The panel shall be made up of: the DTLPG, the Head of Research; the Head of Discipline; and one other member of staff (with an additional member of staff for the funding meeting). The member(s) of staff should ordinarily have supervised a PhD to completion and their selection should be driven by an aspiration that the panel constitutes an appropriate balance as regards gender and literary specialism/period.

The panel will ordinarily meet quarterly to assess PhD applications: MT; HT (twice); and TT. Additional meetings may be called should the level of applications warrant it. This will satisfy the College requirement that admissions be assessed on a rolling basis without adding unduly to the administrative burden. Meetings will be ‘virtual’ with the exception of the funding meeting unless circumstances require an actual meeting. The TT meeting will take place in the first week of May in order to make funding decisions.

Once a full proposal has been submitted to the online admissions system, the following steps should be followed:
1) The DTLPG will ask an appropriate member of staff to assess the materials.

2) The staff member will complete a brief report on the applicant’s suitability for doctoral studies (see appendix A).

3) The DTLPG will circulate the assessor report and the application materials to the panel.

4) Each panel member will submit a brief report (appendix B) for each candidate to the DTLPG.

5) The DTLPG will collate the reports and inform the panel of the collective decision. The reports will be retained by the DTLPG for the purposes of allocating funding at the appropriate meeting.

6) The DTLPG will notify the prospective supervisor of the decision.

7) The supervisor will have the opportunity to engage with the panel should they disagree with the decision. The supervisor can write to the panel through the DTLPG. The panel will then make a final decision which will be binding.

8) The DTLPG will update the online admissions system with the outcome and write to the student directly.

Supervision

College regulations

The College has published a statement outlining the roles and responsibilities of the supervisor with which School members should familiarize themselves (Supervision of Research Guidelines (2012)). The document states inter alia that supervisors will:

- Agree with the student no later than 3 months after registration the basic structure of the research project, an appropriate research method, a realistic plan of work, and any additional required study including Skills development training.
- Establish a practice of regular meetings with the student at which all matters relating to the research project can be discussed. Provide commentary, constructively, ad within a reasonable timeframe, on the student’s oral and written work. Ensure that written evidence of the meeting is kept within the Department.
- Arrange for a replacement in the event of absence for a period exceeding 4 weeks.
- Complete annual progress reports in conjunction with the student in order to monitor the student’s progress and highlight any unexpected problems which can then be addressed.
• Inform the student about the procedures for transfer from the Masters register of confirmation on the PhD register. The supervisor should ensure that transfer/confirmation occurs within 18 months of registration for a full-time student and provide guidance in the drafting of the Report.

A further document Best Practice Guidelines on Research Supervision for Academic Staff and Students is available through the GSO website: https://www.tcd.ie/Graduate_Studies/docs/Supervison%20Guidelines.pdf

School practices

The School adopts as a principle that staff members should be allowed to supervise individual students as they see fit, recognizing that different projects and students have different needs. Normally, a supervisor should not have in excess of 3-5 PhD students although the School recognizes that this may vary according to circumstance. Supervisors shall be free to determine the extent and scope of a research plan; however, the School agrees that there should ordinarily be one meeting per month within term, unless agreed otherwise by both parties. Supervisors will maintain documentation of each meeting for their own records.

Supervisors on leave shall normally continue to supervise students to include reading students’ work, completion of progress reports, approval of confirmation materials, and shall, where possible, be present at confirmation interviews.

Funding

There are a number of funding opportunities available to incoming research students, but it must be acknowledged that these are scarce and highly competitive. In recent years, however, students in the School of English have found the following sources useful:

Ussher Awards

Students of the School of English have generally been very successful in attracting funding from the Ussher Awards. These Awards are granted to exceptionally well-qualified candidates of outstanding promise intending and permitted to register on year one for a higher degree of PhD in the University of Dublin. They are open to competition by graduates of any nationality, for research in any branch of learning in the College (subject to availability of resources and competent supervision in the chosen area). The Awards are for a three-year period of research on the PhD register. They cover annual fees and provide maintenance of approx. €16,000 per annum. There are six Ussher Awards in every academic year. Three are allocated to successful applicants in the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, two in the Faculty of Engineering, Mathematics and Science, and one to a successful applicant in the Faculty of Health Sciences.
New entrants to the research register are not required to complete a separate Award application form. A section on the research application form must be completed in order to be considered for an Award. Nominations are assessed after 1st May and late nominations may be considered if places are still available after this date. Candidates are informed of the outcome of their application from June.

Irish Research Council

The IRC runs an annual competition for doctoral students. These awards are the most substantial funding available to PhD candidates. Students should note that awards are regularly made to applicants who have previously been unsuccessful. The competition is advertised usually in the autumn of every year. Students should keep an eye on the IRC website: http://www.research.ie/. The Trinity Long Room Hub runs information session related to this competition.

Local Authority (Higher Education) Grants

Grant holders who complete a primary degree course may have the grant renewed in order to undertake a full-time postgraduate course. The grant, which covers fees and possibly a contribution to subsistence, may be renewed in subsequent years but is limited to one postgraduate degree of diploma course for each student.

A mature candidate (23 years of age on 1 January of year of entry to postgraduate study) may be eligible for a Local Authority grant on the basis of parents’ income if ordinarily resident with parents or on the basis of own income if resident away from home. Details of income limits for eligibility are available from Local Authorities (Higher Education Service).

More information may be found here:


Provost’s Postgraduate Scholarship Awards

These awards, which will come into effect in the 2018-19 academic year, are made to individual members of academic staff who serve as Principle Investigators (PIs) on projects for which funding is provided to hire full-time postgraduate researchers. Students interested in discussing specific research projects, for which members of the School of English might serve as suitable PIs, should contact individual staff members where appropriate. A full listing of the School’s staff members and their research interests is given here:

https://www.tcd.ie/English/staff/.
Further advice

The Higher Education Authority offers advice on funding on its website:

http://www.studentfinance.ie/

Structured PhD requirements

All PhD students must now complete the structured PhD modules: there are no exceptions. The Graduate Studies Office has requested changes to SITS which are due to be implemented which will prevent a student from being progressed should these requirements not be fulfilled. The DTLPG will inform the students of their obligations but it is up to the supervisor and the student to agree a suitable way of fulfilling those requirements.

Each student has to complete at least 10 and no more than 30 credits within their first 18 months. Students may earn a maximum of 30 ECTS credits in the first 18 months and 60 over the course of their PhD; however, it is likely that most students will prefer to concentrate on their thesis. Part-time students must complete at least 10 credits and no more than 30 within their first 24 months with a maximum of 60 over the course of their PhD.

ECTS credits may be earned through the completion of modules approved by the School and College. The School has endeavoured to offer modules that will be as useful as possible for both those interested in pursuing an academic career and those who seek employment outside the academy.

Supervisors and students should note that it is possible for the student to complete the minimum requirement in the first semester through the ‘Planning and Managing your Research Career’ and ‘Information Literacy’ modules. Modules available to students are documented in the Postgraduate Student Handbook.

The School has decided that those students who take an MPhil module shall normally have their work assessed on a pass/fail basis by their supervisor rather than the module convener, when appropriate.

Procedures for satisfying structured PhD requirements

1) The DTLPG will inform all new PhD students of the structured PhD requirements and the various options available to them during the induction sessions. This information will also be in the handbook.

2) All new students should be encouraged to complete the ‘Planning and Managing your Research and Career’ module offered by College in their first year.
3) By the end of year 1 at the latest the supervisor and student will have agreed what modules the student will complete to satisfy the minimum requirements.

4) The student will confirm the choice in writing to the DTLPG.

5) The DTLPG will record this decision on the student’s file.

6) When the module is complete, the student will ask the module convener (or supervisor for MPhil modules) to confirm this in writing to the DTLPG.

7) The DTLPG will record this on file and, in time, on SITS.

**Progress reports**

Supervisors and students must complete an annual progress report (appendix C) as per College regulations. It is essential that these be completed so that the progress (or lack thereof) of each student be documented and appropriate action taken where required. The substance of the progress report written by the supervisor should be discussed with the student. Annual reports are also due for part-time students.

**First progress report**

The progress report at the end of the first year is crucial, particularly for those at both ends of the achievement spectrum. The initial progress report will be part of the materials reviewed by the Schools Admission & Funding Panel for funding decisions related to continuing students. This will be made explicit to the students so both supervisor and student should bear this in mind when completing the report.

Where students have been admitted who are demonstrably not suitable for doctoral study, this is the first point at which they can be removed from the research register. The School adopts as a principle that all students be given every benefit of the doubt and such a measure should be taken only in extreme cases.

However, though is rare, it is important that the appropriate action be taken when necessary: there is absolutely no requirement to allow a student progress to the confirmation stage if there is sufficient evidence that the student will not succeed. There is an ethical issue in allowing unsuitable students waste their time and money by continuing on the research register.

Supervisors who wish to recommend the removal of their student from the research register at this point should:
1) Ensure that the decision is based on at least two samples of academic work completed during the year.

2) Notify the DTLPG of their intention to make this recommendation.

3) Offer a detailed explanation of their recommendation in the progress report.

4) Inform the student and explain that they have the right of appeal (through the School Appeals Board).

**Progress report procedure**

1. The DTLPG will remind all staff and students that these reports are due in early September (February for March registrants). Students should complete their part of the report and send to the supervisor.

2. The supervisor should complete the form and arrange a meeting with the student to discuss.

3. The completed reports should be sent to the DTLPG by the end of September (end of March for March registrants).

**Confirmation**

The confirmation interview should take place before the end of 18 months (36 for part-time students) on the research register. The DTLPG will write to all supervisors of students in MT of year 2 to remind them that the confirmation materials are due.

The purpose of the confirmation interview is to establish whether the project is on course to satisfy the requirements of the PhD. A range of outcomes are possible and members of the confirmation panel are encouraged to consider the full range of options available to them. Candidates whose materials suggest they will not meet the PhD standard should never be allowed progress past the confirmation stage. Part of the rationale for the 18 month deadline is to allow sufficient time for the candidate to write up and submit an MLitt, should that be deemed a more appropriate route, without incurring fees for a third year. The confirmation panel should not automatically permit an unconfirmed student pursue an MLitt degree, bearing in mind the rigorous demands of that degree.

Confirmation hearings should not normally exceed an hour and should be conducted in a fashion that will help prepare the candidate for a viva. The confirmation panel should ask questions that will challenge the student but that will also encourage the student a chance to display their preliminary findings. The confirmation result should be primarily driven by the submitted materials but the panel should take account of the performance at the
interview when reaching their final decision. The supervisor should be present but does not participate.

Confirmation report

The confirmation report must comprise of the following items:

1) A cover sheet with a signed statement from the supervisor confirming they have reviewed the materials and discussed them with the student (appendix D).

2) A statement outlining clearly the proposed project’s original contribution to knowledge and how it is situated in relation to the existing critical field (1000 words).


4) A sample chapter (10-15000 words).

5) Bibliography of primary and secondary materials (no word limit).

The sample chapter word limit should be strictly observed and excessively long chapters will be rejected. Any sample chapter in excess of 15,000 words must have the approval of the Director of Post Graduate Teaching & Learning (DPGTL) in advance and a very strong justification must be offered.

The student should submit one hard copy of the materials and a soft copy via email to the DTLPG.

Confirmation procedure

1) The student submits the confirmation report to the DTLPG.

2) The supervisor shall suggest appropriate readers.

3) The DTLPG shall nominate a reader.

4) On occasion, the DTLPG may ask the HoS or HoD to chair a confirmation meeting.

5) The DTLPG shall organize a time and venue that suits the student, supervisor, and the panel.

6) The DTLPG and the reader should meet in advance of the confirmation hearing to discuss the work, agree questions that should be asked, and agree a provisional result.
7) After the interview, the reader shall write a report (appendix E) which will be sent to the DTLPG for review. Both parties should agree to and sign the final version.

8) The DTLPG will send the final report to the supervisor and the student.

**Confirmation outcome**

The confirmation interview must have one of the following outcomes as stipulated by the College *Calendar* (text in brackets is the School gloss):

a) continuation on the PhD register
   [the panel may have minor reservations or offer suggestions but are generally confident that the candidate is on course to produce a piece of research that will meet the standards of a PhD]

b) continuation on the PhD register after some minor changes have been made to the PhD confirmation report
   [the panel have identified problems that need to be addressed before the candidate can be confirmed; the changes must be made and approved by the second ‘expert’ reader before the student can be confirmed]

c) continuation on the PhD not recommended at this time: a new report to be written and confirmation interview to be held again as soon as possible thereafter
   [the panel have identified substantive problems that must be addressed before the candidate can be confirmed; these changes normally require a second interview to determine whether they have been made to the satisfaction of the panel.]

d) a recommendation to change to the general Masters register to submit a Masters thesis
   [the panel should ensure that the interview should carefully illustrate to the candidate why this decision has been taken; care should be taken that the questions posed demonstrate why the project will not meet the Calendar criteria for a PhD thesis. Please note that the ‘recommendation’ constitutes a ruling]

e) not to continue as a postgraduate research student
   [the panel should ensure that the interview should carefully illustrate to the candidate why this decision has been taken; care should be taken that the questions posed demonstrate why the project will not meet the Calendar criteria for a PhD or an MLitt thesis]

In the case of outcome b) the panel should suggest an appropriate deadline for the submission of the revised report. This can be negotiated by the student and the supervisor after the panel’s assessment has been digested but a definite submission date should be agreed in due course.
In the event of outcome c), the panel shall agree with the student and supervisor an appropriate timeframe for the resubmission of the materials and subsequent interview. The School adopts as a principle that outcome c) may only be given once.

In the event that the panel decides on outcome d) or e), the student is to be told that they have the right of appeal as laid out in the School Confirmation Appeals Board (appendix F).

In the case of outcome e) the GSO should be informed by the DTLPG so that the student is formally removed from the register.

**Viva voce examination**

**Appointment of examiners**

The external examiner for a PhD thesis should meet College criteria as laid out by the GSO: ‘The external examiner should be a recognized independent expert in the candidate’s field of study. The external examiner should not be a collaborator in the candidate’s research, nor be a recent graduate of the College’.

For budgetary reasons, the School can only sanction examiners from within Europe. However, staff should consider whether it may be possible to secure a non-EU examiner if they happen to be coming to Europe for conferences or research trips. While not ideal, it may also be possible to conduct a viva via video-conferencing, subject to approval from the Dean.

1) The supervisor, after consultation with the student, will suggest an examiner to the DTLPG.

2) Once the DTLPG agrees that the examiner is appropriate, the supervisor should seek informal agreement from the external.

3) The DTLPG and the supervisor should also agree an internal examiner. The internal examiner must not be a collaborator in the student’s research. In exceptional cases, it is possible to nominate two external examiners but this must be approved by the Dean of Graduate Studies and the Head of School.

4) The DTLPG will submit a nomination form for the GSO. **NB Staff should note that there is no requirement that the thesis be submitted for this to take place. If there is any urgency with the viva, supervisors can have examiners approved in advance of thesis submission in order to speed the process along.**
Viva logistics

1) The GSO will send the thesis to the examiners.

2) The internal examiner is responsible for the scheduling of the viva and organizing a venue. The vivas will normally be held in the School Library or an office.

3) The internal examiner is responsible for booking the external’s accommodation (via Diane).

4) The internal examiner is responsible for organizing a meal. The School will cover the cost of a lunch or dinner at the 1592 (ph. 1592), Dunne & Crescenzi (6759892 / 6773815), or any reasonably priced restaurant that has the capacity to invoice the School directly. The external and internal examiners, the student, and the chair of the viva may attend.

5) The internal examiner is also responsible for instructing the external on the submission of expense claims. The external should submit one expense claims to Brenda for his/her fee and travel expenses.

6) The claim form can be found here: https://www.tcd.ie/Graduate_Studies/externalexaminers/research/guidelines/Docs/StaffReimbursementForm.pdf

Viva procedure

The viva should be chaired by the DTLPG or his/her proxy. Viva chairs should familiarize themselves with the Calendar regulations regarding vivas (Part III.2.16). The chair should meet with both examiner shortly before the viva to get a sense of how the viva will go and should also determine whether the examiners wish to tell the candidate the result at the outset or wait until the viva has ended so they can have another discussion. The chair should check whether the examiners would like to have a break called after an agreed period of time e.g. 90 minutes.

The chair is present to ensure that College regulations are followed and that the candidate is treated fairly by the examiners. Normally, the chair will simply introduce the examiners and, at the end, ensure that the candidate is asked whether they have anything in addition to say or have any questions they would like to pose to the examiners.
Results

The *viva* must have one of the following results:

a) the degree be awarded for the thesis as it stands

b) the degree be awarded for the thesis subject to minor corrections, for which two months are allowed from the time of notification
   [the thesis must be resubmitted to the internal examiner only]

c) the thesis be referred for major revision and subsequent re-examination, for which six months are normally allowed from the time of notification
   [the thesis must be resubmitted to both internal and external examiners]

d) a lower degree be awarded, if necessary following minor corrections to the thesis

e) the thesis be failed.

In the case of outcome b) or c), the allowed time period is dated from the official results letter from GSO, not from the *viva*.

In the case of option c), major revision, a fee of €1160 will apply (this applies to both EU/non-EU students). A thesis may only be referred for major revision once: in other words, option c) is not available to examiners on resubmission.

MLitt procedures

MLitt to PhD transfer

Students who wish to transfer from MLitt to PhD need to undergo a transfer interview. This would normally take place after about 18 months on the MLitt register and is effectively the same procedure as a confirmation interview.

Examination of MLitt thesis

The examination of an MLitt thesis requires two examiners, one internal and one external. However, a *viva voce* exam is not required although the student may request one. A *viva* exam should also take place should the examiners be considering referring or failing the thesis.
Appendices

Appendix A – PhD application assessment

School of English
PhD Application Assessment

*NB* This report will be part of the materials assessed for the allocation of funding.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Applicant</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assessor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project title</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please comment on the proposal under each of the following categories and then make an overall recommendation.

*Assessor involvement in proposal development*

*Academic achievement to date*

*Quality of proposal (methodology, originality, knowledge of critical field)*

*Quality of writing sample*

*Fit with TCD resources (supervisor expertise, library resources)*

*Overall recommendation*
# Appendix B – Admissions report

PhD admissions/funding

Applicant report (incoming students)

**NB** This report will be part of the materials assessed for the allocation of funding.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proposed supervisor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project title</td>
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</table>

Please comment briefly on the applicant’s proposal under the following categories. A rating of ‘poor’, ‘fair’, ‘good’, or ‘excellent’ should be offered for each category.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic record</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(primary degree, MA, awards)</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposal</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(clarity and presentation, knowledge of critical field, potential contribution to knowledge, fit with TCD resources)</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>References</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(enthusiasm for project, comparative ranking of applicant, familiarity with applicant’s work)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Recommendation |  |
Please complete this form, ask your supervisor to complete the section overleaf and submit your report to the Director of Teaching & Learning (PG).

Name of student: ...........................................................................................................................

Student number: ............................................................................................................................

Email address: ............................................................................................................................... 

Department: .................................................................................................................................

Degree for which registered: ....................................................................................................... 

Provisional title of thesis: ..............................................................................................................

Name of Supervisor(s): ................................................................................................................

1. Candidate’s self-assessment of work done since the last review
   This is to be submitted to the supervisor for comments. Candidates should not hesitate to mention problems, set-backs etc., since these matters are important in monitoring progress and permitting extensions, etc. (continue on a separate sheet, if necessary).

Candidate’s Signature
2. **Supervisor’s comments:**
(The substance of these observations should be discussed with the candidate.)

Has the candidate been working in TCD all of this year?
(If the answer is no, please state duration of and reasons for absence, place of study
and supervision arrangements).

Do you recommend continuation on the higher degree register?

If the student is on the MLitt or Probationary PhD register in Year 1, do you
have any concerns at this stage about their progress? Has the possibility of
completing an MLitt been discussed with the student?

Do you foresee any problems which might prevent submission of the thesis on
or before the cessation date?

_______________________
Supervisor’s Signature
Appendix D – Confirmation cover sheet

School of English
Confirmation cover sheet
(please attach to the hard copy of your confirmation package)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student Number</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Date of registration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project title</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of submission</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

I have reviewed and discussed these confirmation materials with my student.

________________________________
Supervisor signature
Appendix E – Confirmation interview report

School of English
PhD Confirmation Interview Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student Number</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD Title</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of Interview</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview Panel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Decision**
(please drag x to appropriate box)

- (a) continuation on the Ph.D. register
- (b) continuation on the Ph.D. register after some minor changes have been made to the Ph.D. confirmation report
- (c) continuation on the Ph.D. not recommended at this time: a new report to be written and confirmation interview to be held again as soon as possible thereafter
- (d) a recommendation to change to the general Masters register to submit a Masters thesis
- (e) not to continue as a postgraduate research student

X
Please append a report that gives the panel’s view as to whether the written submitted materials and the candidate’s performance at interview suggest that this project will fulfill the requirements of the PhD standard within the time remaining on the PhD register. The report should offer a general assessment of the materials and interview and, specifically, should address the following criteria: whether the project will make an original and appreciable contribution to knowledge; demonstrates an appreciation of the relationship of the subject to a wider field of knowledge/scholarship; applies an appropriate methodology; and, adheres to the norms of scholarly presentation.
Appendix F – School appeals board

The School of English Confirmation Appeals Board is constituted in accordance with the University of Dublin Calendar, Part III, §1.31.5.

1. Composition
   1.1 The Appeal Board shall be composed of two members. The Board will include the Head of School and Head of Discipline; however, it may be composed of any two senior members of the faculty from within the School (or, in exceptional circumstances, from outside the School) in order to meet the criteria outlined in 1.2 and 1.3, below.
   1.2 The candidate’s supervisor shall not be a member of the Appeal Board.
   1.3 Members of the original Confirmation Panel shall not be members of the Appeal Board.

2. The Appeal Process
   2.1 An appeal must be lodged with the Director of Postgraduate Teaching and Learning within 30 days of notification of the original Confirmation Panel finding.
   2.2 All appeals must be lodged in writing. There is no standard format. The candidate will write to the DPGTL indicating that the correspondence constitutes an appeal, and outlining the grounds for the appeal, with reference to 3.1 to 3.4 below. The candidate may append to this statement of appeal any documents deemed relevant to the appeal.
   2.3 The School Appeal Board will not accept third party appeals.
   2.4 Upon receipt of this material, the DPGTL shall notify the Head of School or Head of Discipline, as appropriate, who shall convene an Appeal Board, supplying members with all materials constituting the candidate’s appeal, as well the reports of the original Confirmation Panel. In the circumstances that both Head of School and Head of Discipline were members of the original Panel, the DPGTL will convene the Board. The Appeal Board’s decision will be based on these written materials.
   2.5 There is no facility for an oral hearing.
   2.6 The Appeal Board will make a decision within 30 days of receipt of all materials, taking account of the grounds outlined in Section 3, below.
3. **Grounds for Appeal**

3.1 Appeals will only be considered under one of three grounds:

3.2 That there were circumstances of which the original Confirmation Panel were unaware at the time that it made its decision. *Explanatory note:* These may be matters of a personal or medical nature, which may have had an impact on the candidate’s work, or matters of a similar nature, and are being put forward as the basis of an *ad misericordiam* appeal.

3.3 That there was substantive irregularity in the conduct of the original Confirmation Panel. *Explanatory note:* This may include allegations that the Board was not properly constituted in breach of College regulations, did not take account of the full range of materials presented, did not provide adequate justification for its decision or other similar matters.

4. **Decisions of the Appeal Board**

4.1 The Appeal Board will make one of the following decisions; in the case of decisions 4.3, 4.4, or 4.5, the reconvened Board will have recourse to any of the options outlined in The University of Dublin Calendar, Part III, §2.14:

4.2 It may uphold the decision of the original Confirmation Panel.

4.3 It may order the Confirmation Panel to reconvene with the same membership.

4.4 It may order the Confirmation Panel to reconvene with different membership from within the School.

4.5 It may order the Confirmation Panel to reconvene with one or more members from outside the School or outside the University.

4.6 The decisions of the Appeal Board are final.

4.7 Candidates who wish to appeal the decision of the Board have recourse to the Dean of Graduate Studies, as per 1.31.5 of Part III of the University of Dublin Calendar.