



# Regulations for the award of SA0

## Specialist Applications Dissertation Subject

(Revised February 2026)

1. 1.1 The candidate must have been accepted on to a research level postgraduate qualification (PhD, MPhil, Masters by Research) at a university and have a nominated supervisor from their university.

### 2. Course of study

2.1 Once a candidate has been accepted onto a postgraduate university programme they shall submit an application form and proposal for research for approval by the IFoA's Board of Examiners.

2.2 The course of study shall comprise supervised research work culminating in the submission of a dissertation as directed by the university supervisor.

### 3. Period of study

3.1 A candidate may be accepted as a full-time student or as a part-time student.

### 4. Dissertation

4.1 The dissertation shall comply with the following conditions:

4.1.1 The dissertation shall form a contribution to knowledge of relevance to actuarial science and afford evidence of originality, shown either by the discovery of new facts or by the exercise of independent critical power.

4.1.2 The greater portion of the work submitted therein shall have been done subsequent to the registration of the candidate for the subject.

4.1.3 The dissertation shall be written in English. The literary presentation shall be satisfactory. The dissertation shall be suitable for publication either as submitted or in an amended form.

4.1.4 The dissertation shall be the candidate's own account of their research and shall be accompanied by a declaration to this effect signed by the candidate. It may describe work



done in conjunction with the supervisor or other persons provided that the candidate clearly states their personal share in the investigation, and that their statement is certified by the supervisors.

4.1.5 The dissertation shall not normally exceed 60,000 words and shall not normally exceed 400 pages in length including Appendices. In exceptional circumstances and provided that permission is sought at a sufficiently early stage, the IFoA may permit a candidate to exceed the stated maxima.

4.1.6 The work should be of a standard suitable to pass peer review. This is of a standard for publication in refereed journals although it is understood that some projects will be commercially sensitive.

4.1.7 The dissertation must contain an abstract.

4.1.8 The dissertation must meet the university's requirements for award of the degree, including any assessment such as a viva. The nominated supervisor must complete a report to the IFoA to confirm the award of the degree and that the submission meets the criteria set out above.

4.2 A candidate shall normally be required to submit two copies of the dissertation, which will become the property of the IFoA. The dissertation shall contain an abstract, preferably not exceeding 200 words. One additional copy of the abstract in the appropriate form shall be submitted for library purposes.

4.3 The library copy of a dissertation shall normally be available for consultation in the library and on the website. In exceptional circumstances, for example in the case of certain commercial or sensitive works, the supervisors may make a recommendation to the IFoA for restricted access.

## **5. Recommendations of the Examiners**

5.1 On receipt of the submission and the university supervisor's report the IFoA Board of Examiners will confirm whether SA0 can be awarded

In exceptional cases the IFoA will consider awarding a SA0 exemption retrospectively for completed research projects at the appropriate level and which meet the specified criteria.