



UNIVERSITY
OF HULL

Masters by Thesis

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Masters by Thesis

Introduction

The following University regulations apply to the following masters degrees classified by the Research Degrees Committee as Masters by thesis: Master of Philosophy, Master of Science, Master of Arts, and Master of Education, and shall thereby exclude those classified as Research Masters.

The University recognises the duration of the Masters by thesis as being as follows, as defined in Regulation 2 below.

Degree	Research Period	Thesis completion period
MA, MSc, Med Full Time	1 year	12 months
MA, MSc, Med Part Time	2 years	12 months
MPhil Full Time	2 years	12 months
MPhil Part Time	3 years	12 months

These regulations do not apply to those degree programmes classified as Research Masters.

These regulations include applications for admission to the above degrees both by candidates who are members of staff of the University (whether teaching, research or other category) and those who are not members of staff of the University.

The University Research Degrees Committee is the final arbiter of matters regarding the application and/or interpretation of the Regulations.

ADMISSION AND ENROLMENT

1. Academic Year

- 1.1 For the purposes of these regulations the academic year is 12 months in length and is considered to consist of three periods, the first two coinciding broadly with the undergraduate trimesters.

2. Admission to a programme

- 2.1 To be admitted to undertake the degree of Masters by thesis a candidate shall:
- a) have been admitted to the degree of Bachelor with First or Upper Second Class Honours or to the corresponding degree in another university approved by the Research Degrees Committee for this purpose or have achieved a comparable qualification as approved by the Research Degrees Committee; except that the Research Degrees Committee may waive the requirement that the candidate shall have obtained honours, or
 - b) have achieved a professional qualification approved by the Research Degrees Committee, or

- c) have been recommended by the examiners of a Diploma course as being a suitable candidate to proceed to the appropriate Masters Degree,
- d) have satisfied such additional entry requirements as may be approved by the Research Degrees Committee from time to time.

3. Duration of prescribed period of study

3.1 For the degree of MPhil the prescribed period of study, training and supervision and thesis finalisation shall extend over a period of either:

- a) 36 months (comprising 24 months of research and up to 12 months of thesis finalisation) as a full-time student in this University, or
- b) 48 months (comprising 36 months of research and up to 12 months of thesis finalisation) as a part-time student.
- c) The prescribed period of study can be set at a greater length, on application to the Research Degrees Committee, in special circumstances (such as in response to the requirements of the Research Councils). This will require the payment of tuition fees at the rate set for that year.
- d) The maximum period of registration for a full-time MPhil candidate is six years from initial registration, including and periods of suspension and changes to mode of study.
- e) The maximum period of registration for a part-time MPhil candidate is seven years from initial registration, including periods of suspension and changes to mode of study.
- f) The University, through RDC, reserves the right to terminate a candidate's registration if they exceed this maximum period.

3.2 For the degrees of MSc, MA and MEd the prescribed period of study, training and supervision shall extend over a period of either:

- a) 24 months (comprising 12 months of research and up to 12 months of thesis finalisation) as a full time student in this University, or
- b) 36 months (comprising 24 months of research and up to 12 months of thesis finalisation) as a part-time student.
- c) The prescribed period of study can be set at a greater length, on application to the Research Degrees Committee, in special circumstances (such as in response to the requirements of the Research Councils). This will require the payment of tuition fees at the rate set for that year.
- d) The maximum period of registration for a full-time MSc, MA and MEd candidate is four years from initial registration, including and periods of suspension and changes to mode of study.
- e) The maximum period of registration for a part-time MSc, MA and MEd candidate is six years from initial registration, including and periods of suspension and changes to mode of study.
- f) The University, through RDC, reserves the right to terminate a candidate's registration if they exceed this maximum period.

3.3 Any period of suspension of study granted in accordance with regulations 9 or 10 shall not count towards the prescribed period of study under 3.1 and 3.2 above.

3.4 A research student who teaches in the University for not more than twelve hours per week shall not for that reason be debarred from being considered as a full-time student for the purposes of this regulation.

4. Candidates who are member of staff of the University

- 4.1 The following apply only to candidates who are members of staff of the University, whether teaching, research or other category unless otherwise stated.
- 4.2 Full time members of staff, other than those who are employed to research, must be enrolled as part-time students.
- 4.3 For the purpose of these regulations members of the research staff who are engaged in teaching in the University for not more than six hours in a week shall be deemed to devote their whole time to research.
- 4.4 A candidate who has enrolled under these regulations and who has subsequently ceased to be a member of staff of this University may submit a thesis for the degree or, in the case of a thesis referred under 4.2, a revised version of the thesis. Departing members of staff must clarify ongoing local funding arrangements.

SUPERVISION AND PROGRESS MONITORING

5. Supervision

- 5.1 A principal supervisor and at least one other (second) supervisor shall be appointed for each candidate.
- 5.2 Supervision of the candidate's thesis shall be conducted in accordance with any code of practice approved by the Research Degrees Committee for the purpose.
- 5.3 Supervision entitlement for both part-time and full-time Masters candidates is defined in the Code of Practice Postgraduate Research Students. Entitlement includes the Mid-Year Monitoring (MYM) meeting but excludes the Annual Monitoring and Progression meeting (AMP), which may be necessary for part time candidates.
- 5.4 In the thesis finalisation period, all PGRs whether full-time or part-time are entitled to one supervisory meeting every other month.

6. Evidence of satisfactory academic progress

- 6.1 A system for monitoring the progress of a candidate shall be in place in accordance with criteria prescribed by the Research Degrees Committee (see Code of Practice Standards and Criteria for Research Degrees).
- 6.2 A candidate's prescribed period of study may be terminated on the grounds of unsatisfactory progress as measured against criteria established under 6.1 provided that this is carried out in accordance with the University Code of Practice Research Degrees: Termination of Candidature. The decision to terminate the prescribed period of study shall be made by the Chair of the Research Degrees Committee, or their delegate, on the recommendation of the Head of Academic Unit and relevant Graduate Research Director.

RESEARCH TRAINING

7. Postgraduate Training Scheme

- 7.1 Subject to the Regulations for the Postgraduate Certificate and Diploma in Research Training all candidates shall enroll for and achieve a minimum of 20 credits in the case of the MSc, MA and MEd and 40 credits in the case of the MPhil from modules designated as part of the Postgraduate Training Scheme (PGTS), administered by the Doctoral College, and detailed in the PGTS Handbook.

7.2 In the case of the MSc, MA and MEd the requirement in 7.1 may be in part be satisfied by the accreditation of a maximum of 10 credits achieved by prior learning. Any application for such accreditation shall be subject to the approval of the relevant Graduate Research Director and Research Degrees Committee on the recommendation of the candidate's supervisor.

7.3 In the case of the MPhil the requirement in 7.1 may be in part be satisfied by the accreditation of a maximum of 20 credits achieved by prior learning. Any application for such accreditation shall be subject to the approval of the relevant Graduate Research Director and Research Degrees Committee on the recommendation of the candidate's supervisor.

SUSPENSION OF STUDY AND REPEAT PERIODS

8. Permitted duration for the accumulation of credits

8.1 A qualification shall not be awarded to a candidate who has not completed training credits and the thesis for examination within seven years of initial enrolment for the degree.

9. Suspension of study requested by a candidate

9.1 During the prescribed period of study as defined in regulation 3, and subject to regulation 8, a candidate may suspend their studies by making a written application using the approved application form to the Research Degrees Committee for periods not exceeding 12 months, or for an extension to a period of suspension of study.

10. Suspension of study on grounds of risk

For suspension of study on grounds of risk please see the Support for Study policy.

11. Exceptional circumstances

11.1 Transfer between full-time and part-time mode

Candidates are permitted one transfer from full-time to part-time, or part-time to full-time mode of study, within the research period. This is not permitted within the last six months of the research period unless in exceptional circumstances and for reasons such as maternity, paternity, caring responsibilities and ill health. Transfer between modes of study is not permitted in the thesis finalisation/writing up period, nor is it permitted retrospectively, unless in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Chair of RDC or their delegate. The remaining duration of the research period is calculated on the basis of full months remaining at a conversion rate of one month full-time = two months part-time.

11.2 Repeating a period

A candidate shall not be permitted to enrol for the degree as new other than with the approval of the Research Degrees Committee. Approval shall only be granted where the candidate has demonstrated significant medical or exceptional personal circumstances affecting the period which is sought to be repeated.

In determining whether to grant approval regard shall be had to Regulation 8 above.

ASSESSMENT

12. Method of Examination

12.1 A candidate shall be examined by means of:

- a) a thesis,
- b) an oral examination, if required by the examiners and notified in writing

- following the Examiners initial assessment of the thesis,
- c) an assessment of any additional studies prescribed by the candidate's academic unit and notified in writing at the commencement of the prescribed period of study.

- 12.2 The thesis shall be on a subject selected by the candidate and approved by the candidate's supervisors and Research Degrees Committee
- 12.3 The MPhil thesis may not exceed 70,000 words and the MSc, MA and MEd theses may not exceed 50,000 words, excluding the Bibliography, but including footnotes and appendices, except with the express permission of the Research Degrees Committee. Applications to exceed the word limit must be made in writing on the correct form and shall be subject to the recommendation of the candidate's supervisor, the relevant external examiner and the relevant Graduate Research Director. Application shall be made no later than the giving of notice set out in 14.1 below.

13. Standards and Criteria for Masters by thesis

- 13.1 The thesis **must** be the result of original research, show an awareness of the relationship of the research to a wider field of knowledge and reflect such further Standards and Criteria as approved by the Research Degrees Criteria from time to time.
- 13.2 A candidate may not submit as a thesis, the work for which credits or a qualification of this University or any other institution have been conferred, but shall not be precluded from incorporating such work in a submission which covers a wider, or substantially different field from that of earlier work, provided that the same is indicated clearly in the current submission.

14. Submission of the thesis

- 14.1 A candidate shall give not less than three months' notice of the expected date of submission of the thesis, and shall, at the same time, confirm the precise title of the thesis.
- 14.2 The candidate shall be responsible for ensuring that an electronic copy of the thesis is received by The Doctoral College office within:
 - a) 2 years of commencing the degrees of MSc, MA or Med if full time, or within three years if undertaken part time.
 - b) 3 years of commencing the degree of MPhil if full time, or within 4 years if part time.
- 14.3 Submission shall be in such format as prescribed, from time to time, by the Research Degrees Committee. Following award of the degree the candidate shall submit an electronic copy of the thesis which shall be retained by, and be the property of, the University.
- 14.4 A candidate shall be barred from submitting the thesis unless the conditions of Reg 7 above have been satisfied.
- 14.5 In addition to the thesis, the candidate shall submit two copies (three copies where the candidate is a member of staff) of a summary of the thesis, which shall not exceed 300 words, and shall be in such format as prescribed, which is subject to change from time to time, by the Research Degrees Committee.

15. Thesis completion/Writing up period

- 15.1 If the candidate is unable to submit the thesis within the prescribed period of study as

outlined in Reg 3 above, they are permitted to enter a writing-up period.

- 15.2 Candidates must enrol formally for the 'writing-up' period and pay the continuation fee in accordance with Reg 18.
- 15.3 The duration of the writing-up period is one year for full-time Masters study and two years for part-time Masters study.

16. Thesis extensions

- 16.1 In exceptional circumstances only, those candidates who are unable to submit the thesis within the period since the commencement of the degree stated below may apply, using the approved application form, to the Research Degrees Committee for an extension to the thesis completion/finalization/writing-up period of up to 12 months. Applications must be submitted before the expiry of the period of study for which the extension is sought:
- a) For the degree of MPhil by full-time study, 36 months,
 - b) For the degree of MPhil by part-time study, 48 months,
 - c) For the degrees of MSc, MA, and MEd by full-time study, 24 months,
 - d) For the degrees of MSc, MA, and MEd by part-time study, 36 months.
- 16.2 Any grant of extension under 16.1 shall be made subject to Reg 8 above and any additional criteria published by the Research Degrees Committee.

Students on a Student Visa are not permitted to stay in the UK beyond the expiry date stated on their visa. Although an extension to studies may be permitted by the University, it may not be appropriate or legally advisable for the student to remain at the University or in the UK to complete their programme of study. Advice regarding whether or not the University will be able to support a further visa application needs to be sought from the International Engagement Compliance Team, in advance of the case for granting the extension being heard.

17. Non submission of the thesis

- 17.1 Where a candidate fails to submit the thesis by the deadline stated in regulation 14.2, or any extended deadline arising from a writing-up period or an extension granted in accordance with 16.1 above, the Chair of RDC shall determine whether to allow the candidate to submit, or make a resubmission, in the case of an examined thesis that has been referred, or requires corrections, or amendments. Where submission or resubmission is not allowed the programme of study shall be deemed terminated without the requirement for examination of the thesis.

Note that a candidate whose programme is terminated under this regulation would be barred from subsequently enrolling for the same programme under reg. 11.

A candidate would be entitled to receive any training credits gained at the point of termination and might be eligible for a Certificate or Diploma in Research Training based on the number of credits gained; eligibility would be determined in accordance with the Cert/Dip regulations.

18. Continuation fees for the thesis finalisation period

- 18.1 Subject to 18.2, a candidate commencing the thesis finalisation/writing-up period or extension period (regulation 16) shall be liable to pay a continuation fee as prescribed by Senate and Council and in force at the time of submission.
- 18.2 A candidate shall be barred from submitting the thesis unless all fees for the programme of study and any other liabilities above have been paid.

19. Appointment of Examiners

- 19.1 The examination shall be conducted by one external examiner and one internal examiner, both appointed by the Research Degrees Committee on the recommendation of the Head of the relevant Academic Unit and a Graduate Research Director from the same area. Examination of the thesis shall normally take place within three months of the date of submission.
- 19.2 Examiners must be nominated following notice of the expected date of submission being received by the Doctoral College (as under 16.1 above). Nominations should be received before submission of the thesis. The Doctoral College will only accept nomination of examiners after the submission of the thesis in exceptional circumstances.
- 19.3 Each examiner shall make an independent report on the published works before the oral examination, shall be present at the oral examination, and shall sign a joint Recommendation of Examiners to record the result of the oral examination.
- 19.4 Examiners should hold a qualification higher than or equal to that being examined.
- 19.5 Where the candidate is a member of staff, whether temporary or permanent or has held a paid appointment or appointments at the University for a cumulative period of more than six months within the last five years, a second external examiner should also be appointed. In some cases, the appointment of a second external examiner may override the need for an internal examiner, but this is at the discretion of the Chair of RDC, who is the final arbiter of the appointment of examiners.
- 19.6 Examiners should have appropriate levels of expertise and experience in relation to the roles to be performed as part of the assessment.
- 19.7 The internal examiner shall not be one of the candidate's supervisors.
- 19.8 If a nominee for examiner is no longer employed in an academic role in a research institution, for example is retired or is an Emeritus Professor, the nomination must be able to evidence recent research work relevant to the subject area.
- 19.9 The examination shall be chaired by a member of academic staff appointed by the Research Degrees Committee in accordance with the University code of practice governing the chairing of research degree by thesis viva voce examinations.
- 19.10 The external examiner should not be a former student of the University, member of staff, or person with Recognised Teacher Status, unless a period of no fewer than five years have elapsed.
- 19.11 Examiners must not have collaborated with the candidate in any previous research endeavours.
- 19.12 Examiners must not be collaborating significantly with the supervision team in any current scholarly activity. Any previous or current collaborations should be declared on the Nomination of Examiners Form.
- 19.13 The supervisors shall be entitled to attend the oral examination with the agreement of the examiners and the candidate, but not participate in the examination.

19.1: 'Normally take place' – this is dependent on the candidate having given the requisite three months' notice of submission under reg. 14.1.

19.4: University Code of Practice Chairing Research Degree by Thesis Viva Voce Examinations requires that all vivas be independently chaired.

20. Examiners' Recommendations

20.1 The examiners must make one of the following recommendations:

- a) that the candidate be awarded the degree.
- b) that the candidate be awarded the degree subject to corrections being made to the thesis to the satisfaction of the internal examiner within three months of the date of being informed of the decision of the examiners. The term correction refers to typographical errors, occasional stylistic or grammatical flaws, corrections to references, etc.
- c) that the candidate be awarded the degree subject to amendments being made to the thesis to the satisfaction of the internal examiner within six months of the date of being informed of the decision of the examiners. The term amendments refers to certain changes of substance in a specific element or elements of the thesis specified by the examiners. These shall not involve a revision of the whole thesis or of a major proportion of it. The changes must be made to the thesis within six months of the date of being informed of the decision of the examiners.
- d) that the thesis be referred subject to such of the following conditions as the examiners may think appropriate:
 - i. that the candidate be required to attend for a second oral examination
 - ii. that the candidate be permitted to submit, on one occasion only, a revised thesis for a second examination, without further research
 - iii. that the candidate be permitted to submit, on one occasion only, a revised thesis for a second examination, after further research
- e) that the thesis is not of the required standard, but the candidate be awarded if the candidate so wishes, the appropriate diploma as determined by the examiners.
- f) that the thesis is not of the required standard and no award be made to the candidate.

20.2 A candidate whose thesis is not of the required standard at either at first or second attempt shall be entitled to receive a written statement from the Examiners of the way in which the work falls short of the requirements to pass.

21. Resubmission of the thesis

21.1 Where a candidate is permitted to submit on one further occasion in accordance with 21.2 the candidate shall be responsible for ensuring that an electronic copy of the thesis is received by The Doctoral College office no later than twelve months from the date on which the candidate was notified of the result.

21.2 The manner of resubmission shall be as required for first submission save except that resubmission shall be subject to the payment of the resubmission fee as prescribed by Senate and Council and in force at the time.

21.3 Where a candidate fails to submit the thesis by the deadline specified in 21.1 the programme of study shall be deemed terminated without the requirement for examination of the thesis.

ACADEMIC/PROFESSIONAL DISCIPLINE

22. Academic Misconduct

- 22.1 Allegations of academic misconduct, shall be subject to the Regulations for Academic Misconduct, and no penalty shall be imposed other than in accordance with the said Regulations.
- 22.2 Candidates shall also abide by the principles of good research practice as defined in the Code of Practice on Research Misconduct. Allegations of research misconduct shall be investigated in accordance with this code.

23. Professional Standards of Conduct (Fitness to Practise)

- 23.1 For information regarding professional standards of conduct (fitness to practise), please refer to the University Regulations Governing the Investigation and Determination of Concerns about Fitness to Practice.

RESULTS AND AWARDS

24. Notifications of Results and Transcripts

- 24.1 All candidates shall be entitled to an official transcript on completion provided they are not in debt to the University for the payment of tuition fees.

Version Control

Version	Author	Date approved	Relevant sections
4 07	Lisa Tees	NA	Migrated to new template
4 08	David Griffiths/Kirstie Skelton Clarke	TBC	<p>Introduction: Durations of programmes table revised for clarity.</p> <p>3.1 Duration of programmes translated from years to months to ensure consistency with PhD regs. Maximum durations of study added. Clauses restructured and added to, a)-f).</p> <p>3.2 Duration of programme translated from years to months to ensure consistency with PhD regs. Maximum durations of study added. Clauses restructured and added to, a)-f).</p> <p>6.2 Following text removed: <i>Criteria shall specifically relate to cases where a candidate has enrolled for a Masters but wishes to be upgraded to a PhD. Criteria and procedures shall be subject to the approval of the Research Degrees Committee.</i></p> <p>8.1 Reference to 'seventh anniversary' changed to 'seven years'.</p> <p>11.1 New clause referring to exceptional circumstances inserted. Subsequent clauses under section 11 renumbered.</p> <p>14.2 Submission of thesis process revised to reflect current practice and clauses renumbered.</p> <p>18.1 Clauses covering continuation fee amended to reflect current practice and for greater clarity.</p> <p>19.1-19.10 Clauses added to provide greater guidance on the Appointment of Examiners.</p>
4 09	David Griffiths/Kirstie Skelton Clarke		<p>Introduction: Durations of programmes table revised for clarity.</p> <p>3.1 Reference to 'completion/ writing up' changed to 'finalization' and</p>

			<p>replaced <i>tuition</i> with <i>tuition</i>. 3.1 e) Duration of programme changed.</p> <p>3.2 Reference to ‘completion/ writing up’ changed to ‘finalization’ and replaced <i>circumstances</i> with <i>circumstances</i> and <i>tuition</i> with <i>tuition</i>.</p> <p>4.2 Following text added ‘<i>fulltime</i>’</p> <p>4.4 Replaced ‘<i>provided that the candidate has completed, while still a member of staff of the University, the period of study required by these regulations; otherwise the enrolment shall lapse</i>’ with ‘<i>Departing members of staff must clarify ongoing local funding arrangements</i>’</p> <p>5.3 clause removed and 5.3 – 5.4 New clauses referring to Supervision inserted.</p> <p>6.1 Following text added ‘see Code of Practice Standards and Criteria for Research Degrees’.</p> <p>6.2 clause removed and renumbered. Replaced ‘<i>the candidate has first been issued with a University Warning by Research Degrees Committee, accompanied by written guidance as to what improvement is required and</i>’ with ‘<i>this carried out</i>’. Added ‘<i>or their delegate</i>’.</p> <p>10 10.1 – 10.8 clauses removed and added ‘For suspension of study on grounds of risk please see the Support for Study policy’.</p> <p>11.1 Reference to ‘<i>writing up</i>’ changed to ‘<i>thesis finalization/ writing up</i>’. Following text added ‘<i>unless in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Chair of RDC or their delegate</i>’.</p> <p>12.3 Following text added ‘<i>must be made in writing on the correct form and</i>’.</p>
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		<p>14.1 Following text removed <i>'along with an abbreviated title which shall not exceed six words'</i>.</p> <p>15 Replaced <i>'writing up'</i> with <i>'Thesis completion/Writing up'</i>.</p> <p>16 Replaced <i>'Extensions to the writing up period'</i> with <i>'Thesis extensions'</i>.</p> <p>16.1 Replaced <i>'A candidate who is unable to submit the thesis by the anniversary of'</i> with <i>'In exceptional circumstances only, those candidates who are unable to submit the thesis within the period since'</i>. Following text added <i>'12 months. Applications must be submitted before the expiry of the period of study for which the extension is sought'</i> and removed the following text <i>'one year, provided the application is submitted before the expiry of the stated anniversary'</i>. Duration of programmes translated from years to months.</p> <p>16.2 Replaced <i>'PGRs'</i> with <i>'Students'</i>. Removed following text <i>'by the Doctoral College'</i>. Replaced <i>'Visa'</i> with <i>'International Engagement'</i>.</p> <p>18 Following text added <i>'for the thesis finalisation period'</i>.</p> <p>18.1 Replaced <i>'Completion'</i> with <i>'Finalisation'</i> and <i>'Reg'</i> with <i>'regulation'</i>.</p> <p>18.2 Replaced <i>'due under 18.1'</i> with <i>'for the programme of study and any other liabilities'</i>.</p> <p>19.1 Following text added <i>'and a Graduate Research Director from the same area'</i>.</p> <p>19.3 clause removed and 19.2, 19.3 19.5, 19.10 and 19.12 new clauses added and renumbered.</p> <p>21.1 Replaced <i>'two copies'</i> with <i>'an electronic copy'</i> and <i>'are'</i> with <i>'is'</i>.</p>
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			21.2 Following text removed ' <i>by Reg 14.1</i> ' and added ' <i>except</i> '. Replaced ' <i>such</i> ' with ' <i>the</i> '.
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