



UNIVERSITY COLLEGE DUBLIN

Policy on Theses in Graduate Taught Programmes

Approved by Academic Council on 23 April 2010

version 1.18

1. INTRODUCTION & CONTEXT

The purpose of this policy is to articulate the processes involved in the preparation, submission and examination of Minor Theses associated with taught Masters programmes. For further information regarding Research Masters or MD or Doctoral Theses, see the *Policy on Theses in Graduate Research Programmes*.

The *Policy on Theses in Graduate Taught Programmes* seeks to:

- Outline the parameters within which a Minor Thesis can be submitted for examination.
- Provide guidelines on the layout, form and presentation of Minor Theses.
- Offer guidance to academic staff on, and highlight the regulatory requirements associated with, the examination of Minor Theses.
- Ensure that the process of thesis submission and examination is conducted in a transparent, effective and timely manner.

2. PREPARATION OF THE MINOR THESIS

The student will prepare a thesis under the direction of a supervisor. The student must be a fully registered student and fees compliant at the time when the thesis is submitted for examination. The thesis can be submitted for examination in soft-bound or hard-bound format.

The following general guidelines apply, and these may be supplemented by School-specific guidelines:

2.1 Paper Quality and Typographical Detail

2.1.1 Method of Production: As these are examination copies of the thesis, they shall be printed on one side of paper.

2.1.2 Layout: Margins at the binding edge shall be not less than 30mm and other margins not less than 20mm. One-and-a-half spacing shall be used, except for indented quotations and footnotes, where single spacing may be used.

2.1.3 Font: The recommended font used shall be a sans serif font (including Arial, Helvetica, Tahoma or Trebuchet) and shall not be less than 11pt. Footnotes shall not be less than 9pt.

2.1.4 Length: Recommendations regarding the appropriate length of the thesis shall be provided by the relevant School.

2.1.5 Page Numbering: Pages shall be numbered consecutively throughout the substantive text of the thesis, including appendices. Prefacing pages shall also be numbered consecutively, but utilising the Roman numeral format (i., ii., iii., iv., v., etc.). Page numbers shall be right justified at the bottom of the page.

2.2 Preliminaries

2.2.1 Title Page: The title should describe the content of the thesis accurately and concisely. The title page shall give the following information in the order listed (see Appendix 1):

- The full title of the thesis and subtitle, if any.
- The full name of the author (followed, if desired, by any qualifications).
- That "The thesis is submitted to University College Dublin in part fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of... ..".
- The School(s) in which the research was conducted.
- Name of the supervisor of the research.
- The month and year of submission.

2.2.2 Table of Contents: The table of contents shall immediately follow the title page. It should list the title of each chapter and the main sections in each chapter together with the relevant starting page numbers.

2.2.3 Abstract: There shall be a summary abstract of the thesis (of approximately 300 words) immediately following the table of contents page(s).

2.2.4 Collaborations: Where the research activity for the thesis was undertaken jointly with others, the name of such collaborators or co-authors must be listed immediately following the summary abstract page, including a short description of the nature of the contribution made by each author, including the student.

3. SUBMISSION OF THE MINOR THESIS

3.1 Minor Theses Submission Dates

The Academic Council determines and publishes in advance the dates for each term of each academic year. These dates are relevant to the submission of Minor Theses on graduate taught programmes. Module or programme co-ordinators may, where appropriate, set deadlines for submission of Minor Theses prior to these dates. However, the final date that a student is entitled to submit a Minor Thesis is the last day of the examination period in the term for which they are registered. These dates are available online at <http://www.ucd.ie/registry/>

Graduate taught students are normally expected to submit a Minor Thesis by the submission deadline. The University recognises, however, that students may experience extenuating circumstances which adversely affect their ability to meet their submission deadline. Please refer to the *Policy on Extenuating Circumstances* for further information where you have experienced such extenuating circumstances¹. In the absence of extenuating circumstances where a student does not submit a Minor Thesis by the submission deadline, the *Policy on Late Submission of Coursework*, including penalties for late submission, applies.²

3.2 Registration and Fees Compliance

It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that they are fully registered and fees compliant prior to submission of the Minor Thesis. Furthermore a student will not be eligible to graduate until such time as their registration and fees status is in order.

¹ The *Policy on Extenuating Circumstances*, including guides for students and staff and the application form, can be found at <http://www.ucd.ie/registry/academicsecretariat/pol.htm#e>.

² The *Policy on Late Submission of Coursework* can be found at <http://www.ucd.ie/registry/academicsecretariat/pol.htm#l>.

3.3 Process for Submitting Minor Theses

Normally at least two copies of the Minor Thesis must be submitted by the student to the relevant School Office – students should check with their School Office to confirm the precise number of copies required. The School Office will distribute copies of the thesis to the examiner(s), normally also retaining one copy for School records. A School may also request submission of an electronic copy of the Minor Thesis.

The student must also submit two copies of the **Graduate Minor Thesis Submission Form** (Appendix 2), with one copy to be retained by the School and one copy returned to the student, signed and dated by the relevant administrator in the School Office to confirm that the thesis has been received. The student must complete this form to confirm that the research work is the student's own work, and that the student has not obtained a degree or other award in University College Dublin or elsewhere on the basis of the research presented in the thesis.

3.4 Storage of a Minor Thesis in a School

One copy of the Minor Thesis must be held by the School for a minimum of 13 months following the date of submission of the thesis. During this time, the School, with the consent of the student, shall determine if, and under what conditions, the thesis may be viewed by School staff, students and/or other interested individuals in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 1997.

4. EXAMINATION OF THE MINOR THESIS

4.1 Examination Role of the Module Coordinator

The Module Co-ordinator for the Minor Thesis module shall be responsible for oversight of the examination of Minor Theses. The Module Co-ordinator may, in some instances, also act as internal examiner, and it is also considered good practice to have a second internal examiner for such theses. The Module Co-ordinator is also responsible for submission of the grade(s) for the Minor Thesis module in accordance with University grade management and processing procedures and *General Regulations* 4.9 to 4.16 (see http://www.ucd.ie/registry/academicsecretariat/pol_regs.htm).

When examining the Minor Thesis, the examiner(s) are encouraged to be cognizant of the learning outcomes associated with a taught Master's degree award (NQAI Level 9). Minor Theses are graded and these grades are reviewed and ratified in accordance with the UCD grade approvals process.

Title	Masters (MA, MBA, MBS, MSc, MSocSci etc)
Class of Award	Major
Level	9 NQAI
Volume	Large
Knowledge & Understanding	have demonstrated specialized, detailed or advanced theoretical and conceptual knowledge and understanding, which is based on consideration of current debate and controversy at the forefront of the field and that provides a basis or opportunity for originality in developing and/or applying ideas, often within a research context.
Applying Knowledge & Understanding	can apply their knowledge, understanding, and problem-solving abilities in new or unfamiliar environments, within broader (or multidisciplinary) contexts, or to generate new knowledge through research.
Making Judgements	have the ability to integrate knowledge and handle complexity, and formulate judgments with incomplete or limited information, and to reflect on wider disciplinary, scientific, professional issues and social and ethical responsibilities linked to the application of their knowledge and judgments.
Communications & Working Skills	can communicate their conclusions, and the knowledge and rationale underpinning these, to specialist and non-specialist audiences clearly and unambiguously.
Learning Skills	have the learning skills to allow them to continue to study in a manner that may be largely self-directed or autonomous.

4.2 Conflict of Interest

Staff are sometimes involved in teaching their children, partners, other family members or other friends and associates. These situations have the potential of creating problems in relation to examining. Staff should anticipate these potential problems and alert their Head of School to the situation. In order to avoid any perceptions of bias and to protect the member of staff (and the student) from any allegations of lack of objectivity, the Head of School should take appropriate steps to avert a situation where the member of staff would be required to examine the work of family, friends or associates by changing the School's teaching or supervisory arrangements or, where this is not feasible, by appointing an alternative internal examiner. The member of staff should not be involved in any discussion with internal or external examiners, and should withdraw at the appropriate juncture from any School Examination Committee meeting, School Review, Programme Board meeting or Programme Examination Board meeting. All internal examiners in the School should be careful to exercise objectivity towards any student who is related to or associated with a colleague. Staff who have family members, friends or associates who are examination students in other Schools or Colleges should refrain from making enquiries about examination results from their academic colleagues.³

4.3 Role of the Extern Examiner of a Graduate Taught Programme

The University's *Policy Statement and Principles on Extern Examination* states that:

"2.4 The role of the extern examiner is to review, moderate and enhance the assessment process, and they will not routinely act as an additional examiner. The conduct of assessment and the determination of grades and awards is a matter for the internal examiner acting with the support and advice of the extern examiner. Nonetheless, in particular circumstances and in accordance with the policies of the University, extern examiners may be involved in the assessment process as second or additional examiners."

It is at the discretion of the relevant Head of School, in consultation with the relevant extern examiner, to determine the particular circumstances under which the extern examiner plays a role in the examination of Minor Theses. Where the extern examiner does play a role in the examination of Minor Theses, this should be communicated to students by the School and students must submit three copies of the thesis to the relevant School Office. The School Office will give one copy to the internal examiner, one copy to the extern examiner and one copy will be retained by the School.

³ Examination Guidelines for Staff may be found on the Assessment, UCD Registry website at

Appendix 1 – Sample Title Page
(Irish language version also required)



Sample Thesis Title: The Sample Title of a Minor Thesis

Joe Bloggs, BA

The thesis is submitted to University College Dublin in part fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of ...

School of Minor Thesis Studies

Supervisor: Professor Minor Thesis Supervisor

August 2010

Appendix 2 – Graduate Minor Thesis Submission Form

All forms and reports should be typed and are available to download from http://www.ucd.ie/registry/assessment/student_info/graduatestudents.html



University College Dublin
An Coláiste Ollscoile, Baile Átha Cliath

GRADUATE MINOR THESIS SUBMISSION FORM

At least two copies of this form should be completed (typed) by the student and signed and submitted together with the requisite number of copies of the thesis to the relevant School Office – students should check with their School Office to confirm the precise number of copies required. One copy of this form is to be retained by the School and one copy returned to the student, signed and dated by the relevant administrator in the School Office to confirm that the thesis has been received.

Student Name:

Telephone No.:

Student Number:

Address:

Programme:

School:

Module Code and Title:

Supervisor:

TITLE OF THESIS:

To be completed by the Student:

I hereby certify that the submitted work is my own work, was completed while registered as a candidate for the degree stated above, and I have not obtained a degree elsewhere on the basis of the research presented in this submitted work. Where the submitted work is based on work done by myself jointly with others, I certify that a substantial part is my own original work, the extent of which is indicated in the collaborations page of the submitted work.

Student Name (printed):

Student Signature:

Date:

To be completed by the School Office:

Number of copies received:

Received by (print name):

Date:

Aguisín 2 – Foirm Thaiscthe Miontráchtas Céimithe

Ba chóir gach foirm agus tuarascáil a chlósscríobh agus tá siad ar fáil le híoslódáil ag http://www.ucd.ie/registry/assessment/student_info/graduatestudents.html



University College Dublin
An Coláiste Ollscoile, Baile Átha Cliath

FOIRM THAISCTHE MIONTRÁCHTAS CÉIMITHE

Ba chóir go gcomhlánfadh an mac léinn dhá choip ar a laghad den fhoirm seo (clósscríofa) iad a shíniú agus iad a chur isteach in éineacht leis an méid chúí cóipeanna den tráchtas chuig an Oifig Scoile chúí – ba chóir do mhic léinn seiceáil a dhéanamh leis Oifig Scoile a bhaineann leo lena chinntiú méid beacht na gcóipeanna atá riachtanach. Ba chóir go gcoimeádfadh an Scoil cóip amháin den fhoirm seo agus go dtabharfar cóip amháin don mac léinn, í sínithe, agus an dáta curtha uirthi ag an riarthóir cuí in Oifig na Scoile lena chinntiú go bhfuil an tráchtas faighte.

Ainm an Mhic Léinn

Uimhir Theileafóin

Uimhir Mhac Léinn:

Seoladh:

Clár

Scoil:

Cód agus Teideal an Mhodúil:

Maoirseoir:

TEIDEAL AN TRÁCHTAIS:

Le comhlánú ag an Mac Léinn:

Deimhnímse leis seo gurb é mo shaothar féin an obair atá curtha isteach agam, gur tugadh chun críche é agus mé cláraithe ar iarrthóir ar an gcéim thuasluaite, agus nach bhfuil céim eile faighte agam mar gheall ar an taighde a chuirtear i láthair sa saothar seo. Sa chás go bhfuil an saothar a cuireadh isteach bunaithe ar shaothar a rinne mé in éineacht le daoine eile, dearbhaím gurb é mo shaothar féin amháin cuid mhaith den saothar sin, an méid de sin a chuirtear in iúl ar leathanach comhoibríthe den saothar a cuireadh isteach.

Ainm an Mhic Léinn (priontáilte):

Síniú an Mhic Léinn:

Dáta:

Le comhlánú ag Údaráis na Scoile:

An líon cóipeanna a fuarthas:

Faighte ag (priontáil d'ainm):

Dáta:

Tracking Information

Policy Working Group

Role	Name	e-mail	tel
Dean of Graduate Studies and Post-Doctoral Training and Chair of the ACCE	Prof. Michael Ryan	michael.p.ryan@ucd.ie	4042
Deputy Registrar for Graduate Studies	Prof. Julie Berndsen	julie.berndsen@ucd.ie	2493
Supervisor of Examinations and Dean of Academic Affairs (until August 2009)	Prof. Gerry Doyle	gerry.doyle@ucd.ie	1095
Director of Academic Secretariat, UCD Registry	Dr Sinead Critchley	sinead.critchley@ucd.ie	1344
Director of Assessment, UCD Registry	Ms Karen O'Shea	karen.oshea@ucd.ie	1459
Policy Officer	Mr Michael Kennedy	michael.e.kennedy@ucd.ie	1081
Policy Officer	Mr Ciarán Ó hUltacháin	ciaran.ohultachain@ucd.ie	1652

Version History

Version	Date	Summary of Changes	Changed by
1.1	16 Jul 08	First draft	Ciarán Ó hUltacháin
1.2	11 Aug 08	Second draft with minor changes, following consultation with Michael Kennedy	Ciarán Ó hUltacháin
1.3	31 Oct 08	Additional minor changes	Michael Kennedy
1.4	02 Dec 08	Additional minor changes following meeting of Policy Working Group	Michael Kennedy
1.5 & 1.6	31 Mar 09	Additional changes following input from Graduate School Boards	Michael Kennedy
1.7	15 Apr 09	Additional changes following meeting of Policy Working Group	Michael Kennedy
1.8	27 May 09	Additional changes following meeting of Policy Working Group	Michael Kennedy
1.9	18 Jun 09	Additional changes following meeting of Policy Working Group	Michael Kennedy
1.10	11 Sep 09	Additional changes following meeting of Registry Working Group	Michael Kennedy
1.11	15 Oct 09	Additional changes following meeting of Registry Working Group	Ciarán Ó hUltacháin
1.12	20 Oct 09	Additional changes following meeting of Policy Working Group	Ciarán Ó hUltacháin
1.13	07 Dec 09	Additional changes following meeting of Registry Management Team	Ciarán Ó hUltacháin
1.14 & 1.15	21 Jan 10	Additional minor changes following consideration by ACCE and feedback received from Human Sciences	Michael Kennedy
1.16	04 Mar 10	Minor change regarding role of the Extern Examiner based on recent update to that policy.	Ciarán Ó hUltacháin
1.17	26 Mar 10	Minor changes following UGPB meeting of 25 March.	Michael Kennedy
1.18	28 Apr 10	Additional minor changes following AC meeting of 23 April. Final APPROVED version.	Michael Kennedy
1.18	21 Oct 10	Revisions proposed by the Leave of Absence, Extension and Withdrawal Policy Review Group.	Martina Boyle
1.18	29 Aug 11	Irish version of thesis submission form attached	Martina Boyle

Consultation and Approvals Plan

Committee/Group	Date		Version	Action	Decision
	Meeting	Circulation			
Graduate School Directors	08 Dec 08	03 Dec 08	1.4	Discussion	
Policy Working Group members	misc	misc	1.3 & 1.6 – 1.8	Discussion	
Academic Council Committee on Examinations (ACCE)	10 Dec 09	3 Dec 09	1.13	Discussion	
Graduate School Directors		21 Jan 10	1.14		
Academic Council	23 Apr 10	19 Apr 10	1.17	For Approval	Approved
UGPB	25 Nov 10		1.18	Discussion	Recommended
Academic Council	08 Dec 10		1.18	For approval	Approved