



ACADEMIC SECRETARIAT UCD REGISTRY

Policy on Theses in Graduate Research Programmes

ACADEMIC POLICY

Approved by Academic Council on **28 April 2011**

Version: **1.34**

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1. Introduction and Context

The *Policy on Theses in Graduate Research Programmes* articulates the various requirements and responsibilities associated with:

- The process of preparing, submitting and processing graduate research degree theses.
- The process of examining graduate research degree theses, including an identification of the roles and responsibilities of key parties.

It is essential that this policy is followed in the course of preparation, submission, processing and examination of all graduate research degree theses.

This policy applies to all candidates, regardless of the date of commencement of their programme of study. Further details regarding the specific requirements for the Research Masters Degree, Doctor of Medicine (MD), Doctor of Philosophy (pre-2006 commencement), Doctor of Philosophy (post-2006 commencement) and Doctor of Nursing (DN) and Doctor of Midwifery (DM) are included in the relevant sections.

2. Purpose

The purpose of the policy is to clearly articulate the processes involved in the preparation, submission, processing and examination of graduate research degree theses. In doing so, the policy:

- Outlines the parameters within which a graduate research degree thesis can be submitted for examination.
- Provides guidelines for the layout, form and presentation of theses.
- Identifies the responsibilities of each party within the University with respect to the preparation, submission, processing and examination of graduate research degree theses.
- Ensures that both the process of thesis submission and examination is conducted in a transparent, effective and timely manner.
- Identifies the responsibilities of students and the University where a student 1) requires an extension to their thesis submission deadline due to extenuating circumstances; or 2) has not completed their thesis by their submission deadline and has not had extenuating circumstances.

3. Preparation of the Graduate Research Degree Thesis

The candidate will prepare a thesis under the direction of the Principal Supervisor and (where applicable) with the support of the Research Masters Panel or Doctoral Studies Panel. The candidate must be a fully registered student and fees compliant at the time when the thesis is submitted for examination. The candidate can check their fees status on their UCD Student Information System (SIS) account.

In line with the *Regulations for Research Masters Degrees*¹, the *Regulations for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy*² and the *Regulations for the Degrees of Doctor of Nursing and Doctor of Midwifery*³ Schools should articulate the range of acceptable formats in which Masters or Doctoral research may be submitted for examination. For example:

- A traditional thesis.
- A collection of papers (including published papers or papers submitted or prepared for submission) describing a coherent programme of research which has been published or prepared for publication in peer-reviewed

¹ Section 13, *Academic Regulations*

² Section 21, *Academic Regulations*

³ Section 37, *Academic Regulations*



journals of international standing, accompanied by a critical and theoretical overview of the work presented in the papers.

- A substantial collection of original creative material, together with a written thesis that contextualises the work within an academic framework.

All formats in which Masters or Doctoral research may be submitted for examination must be consistent with the needs of the research project, as recommended by the Principal Supervisor, Research Masters Panel or Doctoral Studies Panel, and as approved by the relevant Graduate School Board. In line with the *Regulations for the Degree of Doctor of Medicine*⁴ the candidate's research will be presented in a thesis describing the context, nature, methodology and outcomes of the research.

The following general guidelines for preparation of the traditional thesis format, as well as any thesis component of any other format, apply. These guidelines may be further supplemented by School-specific guidelines.

3.1. Paper Quality and Typographical Detail

- 3.1.1. Method of Production: As these are examination copies of the thesis, they shall be printed on one side of paper.
- 3.1.2. 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.
- 3.1.3. Font: The recommended font 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.
- 3.1.4. Length: The appropriate length of the thesis shall be agreed between the candidate and the Principal Supervisor in accordance with the traditions of the discipline.
- 3.1.5. 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. If there is more than one volume, each volume shall carry its own pagination.

3.2. Preliminaries

- 3.2.1. Title Page: The title should describe the content of the thesis accurately and concisely. The title page of every volume shall give the following information in the order listed (see Appendix i):
 - The full title of the thesis and subtitle, if any.
 - The total number of volumes, if more than one, and the number of the particular volume.
 - The full name of the author (followed, if desired, by any qualifications).
 - That "The thesis is submitted to University College Dublin in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of [Research Masters or Doctor of Medicine or Doctor of Philosophy or Doctor of Nursing or Doctor of Midwifery, as applicable]."
 - The School(s) in which the research was conducted.
 - Name(s) of the Head(s) of School(s) in which the research was undertaken.
 - Name(s) of the Principal Supervisor(s) of the research.
 - Name(s) of the members of the Research Masters Panel or Doctoral Studies Panel (where applicable).
 - The month and year of submission.
- 3.2.2. 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.

⁴ Section 29, *Academic Regulations*



- 3.2.3.** Abstract: There shall be a summary abstract of the thesis (of approximately 300 words) immediately following the Table of Contents page(s).
- 3.2.4.** Statement of Original Authorship: The following statement of original authorship shall immediately follow the abstract page, “I hereby certify that the submitted work is my own work, was completed while registered as a candidate for the degree stated on the Title Page, and I have not obtained a degree elsewhere on the basis of the research presented in this submitted work”.
- 3.2.5.** 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 statement of original authorship page, including a short description of the nature of the contribution made by each author, including the candidate.

3.3. Appointment of the Examination Committee

The Examination Committee shall consist of both internal and extern examiner(s). The circumstances in which the Chair of the Examination Committee is also an examiner are detailed in Table A. In all instances the Chair of the Examination Committee will receive a copy of the thesis. The specific requirements for the constitution of the examination committee for the Research Masters, Doctor of Medicine, Doctor of Philosophy (pre-2006 commencement), Doctor of Philosophy (post-2006 commencement) and Doctor of Nursing and Doctor of Midwifery degrees are outlined in the table below:

TABLE A: Appointment of the Examination Committee

	Internal Examiners	Extern Examiners	Chair of Examination Committee	Principal Supervisor
Research Masters	1 or 2	1 minimum, second where candidate is FT academic staff ⁵ of UCD or other College of NUI	Normally internal examiner	Normally cannot be internal examiner, can attend <i>viva voce</i> (where applicable) in a silent capacity, with consent of candidate and Chair
Doctor of Medicine (MD)	1	1 minimum, second where candidate is FT academic staff ⁶ of UCD or other College of NUI	Head of the School of Medicine and Medical Science (or nominee) and is not an examiner, and is an additional member of Exam Committee	Cannot be internal examiner, can attend <i>viva voce</i> (where applicable) in a silent capacity, with consent of candidate and Chair
PhD (pre-2006)	2 minimum	1 minimum, second where candidate is FT academic staff ⁷ of UCD or other College of NUI (in which case, 2 nd extern replaces 2 nd intern)	Normally Head of School (or nominee), and can be an internal examiner, and is not an additional member of Exam Committee	Can be an internal examiner and can be Chair
PhD (post-2006)	1 or 2	1 minimum, second where candidate is FT academic staff ⁸ of UCD or other College of NUI (in which case, 2 nd extern is additional and does not replace an internal examiner)	Normally Head of School (or nominee) and is not an examiner, and is an additional member of Exam Committee	Cannot be internal examiner, cannot be Chair, can attend <i>viva voce</i> in a silent capacity, with consent of candidate and Chair
Doctor of Nursing/ Midwifery (DN/DM)	1 or 2	1 minimum, second where candidate is FT academic staff ⁹ of UCD or other College of NUI (in which case, 2 nd extern is additional and does not replace an internal examiner)	Head of the School of Nursing, Midwifery and Health Systems (or nominee) and is not an examiner, and is an additional member of Exam Committee	Cannot be internal examiner, cannot be Chair, can attend <i>viva voce</i> in a silent capacity, with consent of candidate and Chair.

The members of the Examination Committee should be appointed and approved at least three months prior to submission by the candidate of the graduate research degree thesis.

⁵ See *Academic Regulation* 14.1.4

⁶ See *Academic Regulation* 30.1.4

⁷ See *Academic Council Regulation* 4, 5.3

⁸ See *Academic Regulation* 22.1.4. A second extern examiner should also be appointed for other PhD candidates where the Graduate School Board considers a potential conflict of interest may arise.

⁹ See *Academic Regulation* 38.1.4. A second extern examiner should also be appointed for other DN/DM candidates where the Graduate School Board considers a potential conflict of interest may arise.



- 3.2.6. Appointment of Internal Examiner(s):** The internal examiner(s) shall be proposed by the Head of School and appointed by the Academic Council Committee on Examinations on the recommendation of the College Graduate School Board.¹⁰ An internal examiner will be an active researcher in the broad area of the thesis topic or in a cognate discipline and should normally be a member of the academic staff of the University.
- 3.2.7. Appointment of Extern Examiner(s):** The extern examiner(s) shall be nominated by the Head of School (and, where relevant, on the recommendation of the Doctoral Studies Panel) and, subject to the recommendation of the College Graduate School Board and approval of the Academic Council Committee on Examinations, they shall be recommended to and appointed by the National University of Ireland. An extern examiner for an MD or a doctoral thesis shall be a recognised expert in the area of research of the thesis as evidenced in the curriculum vitae (including publications) of the proposed extern examiner, submitted to the Graduate School Board as part of the approval process.
- 3.2.8. Appointment of the Chair of the Examination Committee:** For the Research Masters Degree, the internal examiner will normally act as the Chair of the Examination Committee. For the Doctor of Medicine degree, the Head of the School of Medicine and Medical Science (or nominee) will normally act as the Chair of the Examination Committee. For the Doctor of Philosophy Degree, the Chair of the Examination Committee is normally the Head of School or their nominee. For the Doctor of Nursing and Doctor of Midwifery Degree, the Chair of the Examination Committee shall be the Head of the School of Nursing, Midwifery and Health Systems or their nominee.
- 3.2.9. 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 candidate) 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 extern 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 candidate who is related to or associated with a colleague. Staff who have family members, friends or associates who are examination candidates in other Schools or Colleges should refrain from making enquiries about examination results from their academic colleagues.¹¹ Care should also be taken with the appointment of extern examiners to ensure that no possible conflict of interest may arise.

4. Pre-Thesis Submission: Extension

Students on graduate research programmes are normally expected to submit their thesis by the submission deadline for their programme and within the prescribed period of registration¹² as outlined in the regulations. Information

¹⁰ Information on how to nominate extern and internal examiners for approval by the ACCE is available on the ACCE intranet page at <https://intranet.ucd.ie/registry/assessment/acce.html>

¹¹ Examination guidelines for staff are included in Section 5 of this Policy and on the Assessment, UCD Registry website at http://www.ucd.ie/registry/assessment/info_staff.htm

¹² **Prescribed period of registration:** this refers to the period of time during which a research degree student is expected to be registered to their programme of study as laid down in the relevant regulations. Please note: for the purposes of this policy, three terms is equivalent to one calendar year.

Programme type	Minimum registration period		Maximum registration period	
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time
Research Masters Degree	1 calendar year	2 calendar years	2 calendar years	4 calendar years
PhD Degree (post-2006)	3 calendar years	5 calendar years	4 calendar years	6 calendar years
PhD Degree (pre-2006)			6 calendar years	
MD Degree	2 years	4 years	2 years	4 years
DN/DM Degree	3 years	6 years	3 years	6 years



regarding the submission deadlines for graduate research theses, which are aligned with the approved University term dates, is available on the Fees and Grants section of the Registry website.¹³

The University recognises that students may experience extenuating personal, medical or academic circumstances that may prevent them from meeting their thesis submission deadline, and in such instances, a student may apply for an extension¹⁴. In instances where the student has not completed their thesis within the prescribed period of registration and there are no extenuating personal, medical or academic circumstances, the student should apply for permission to continue in their programme (see 4.1.2 below).

Students on graduate research programmes should communicate with their Principal Supervisor and other members of their Doctoral Studies Panel, Research Masters Panel or MD Committee as soon as is reasonably possible. There are a variety of support systems within UCD where a student may seek further advice and assistance. An up-to-date list of these support systems can be accessed at <http://www.ucd.ie/students/studentssupport.html>.

It is the responsibility of students on graduate research programmes to apply for an extension or permission to continue in the programme. Where a graduate research student does not submit their thesis by the submission deadline for their programme, does not apply for an extension or for permission to continue in their programme and is absent from the University for a period of greater than three months, without notifying the University, and where they fail to reply within 30 days to a registered letter posted to the last permanent postal address held by the University or an email sent to their last notified email address, the student's registration will be cancelled. Such students will remain liable for any fees up to the date of that final notice.

4.1. Options: Extension or Permission to continue in the programme

4.1.1. What is an extension?

An extension is a variation to the submission deadline that compensates for a period of time where a student has paid full fees but has been unable to pursue studies for extenuating personal, medical or academic circumstances. An extension may only be granted where there are such extenuating circumstances. The student must normally apply for an extension in advance of the thesis submission deadline and it must be approved by the relevant School and Graduate School Board. A student is not normally liable for fees.

NOTE: The University reserves the right to investigate the validity of applications. In cases where there is a suspicion that an application may have been submitted fraudulently, the issue may be referred to the University's disciplinary process.

4.1.2. Permission to continue in the programme

A student applies for permission to continue in their programme beyond their prescribed period of registration where they have not submitted their thesis by their submission deadline and have not had extenuating personal, medical or academic circumstances. Each application to continue in the programme is made for a period no shorter than a term and no longer than three terms in duration. It must normally be made in advance of a student's thesis submission deadline and is approved by the relevant School and Graduate School Board. A student is liable for fees.

Note: **Retrospective applications** for extension or permission to continue in the programme beyond the prescribed period of registration may be considered only in exceptional cases. It is at the discretion of the Graduate School Board whether or not to consider a retrospective application.

4.1.3. What are extenuating personal, medical and academic circumstances?

This policy is not prescriptive with regard to the specific types of extenuating circumstances that may be considered acceptable justification, but may include the following:

- **Personal circumstances** include, but are not limited to, family bereavement, family illness, disability, maternity, paternity or adoptive leave, carer duties and/or childcare difficulties.

¹³ http://www.ucd.ie/registry/adminservices/fees/thesis_submission.htm

¹⁴ Where such extenuating circumstances adversely affect their ability to study, complete assessments or attend their required classes and other learning activities for their **taught modules**, a student may make an application under the *Policy on Extenuating Circumstances* (<http://www.ucd.ie/registry/academicsecretariat/pol.htm#e>).



- **Medical circumstances** include any medical condition for which a medical certificate has been supplied certifying that the student has been unable to attend the University or otherwise fulfill the requirements of their academic programme.
- **Academic circumstances** are exceptional academic problems that may include changing research and scholarship which requires fundamental changes in the research question as approved, or situations where a Principal Supervisor has been absent due to unforeseen circumstances.

4.1.4. Application procedure

The School and Graduate School Board are responsible for deciding applications for extension and permission to continue in the programme.¹⁵

Students should document and report as much information as possible in the application procedure to ensure complete analysis of the situation, and must apply in writing to the relevant School Office on the appropriate University application form (*Extension*¹⁶ [see Appendix ii for short guidance notes] or *Permission to continue in the programme*¹⁷ [see Appendix iii for short guidance notes]).

All requests must be supported by the Principal Supervisor and the Head of School (or their nominee) to which the graduate student is registered. Where the support of the Principal Supervisor is not forthcoming, the student may appeal directly to the Head of School, supplying all associated documentation. Where the support of the Head of School to which the graduate research student is registered is not forthcoming, the student may appeal directly to the Graduate School Board, supplying all associated documentation.

The School shall review the completed application form and supporting documentation, and submit this documentation accompanied by its recommendation, including an agreed work plan as necessary (in the case of applications for permission to continue in the programme), to the Graduate School Board. A School representative must be present and prepared to discuss each case at the meeting of the Graduate School Board to which the application is submitted.

5. Submission of the Graduate Research Degree Thesis

Information regarding the deadlines for submission of graduate research degree theses (and the associated fees) is available on the Fees and Grants section¹⁸ and the Academic Secretariat section¹⁹ of the Registry website. A candidate shall submit the appropriate number of copies of the thesis to the Student Desk, UCD Registry based on the number of members of the Examination Committee. The copies of the thesis shall be submitted for examination in softbound format and they must be accompanied by a completed **Research Degree Examination Form** (Appendix ii). The candidate must complete and sign this form to confirm that the research work is the candidate's own work, and that the candidate has not obtained a degree in this University or elsewhere on the basis of the research presented in the thesis. This form must also be signed by the Principal Supervisor confirming that the research has been carried out, and the final draft of the thesis, as submitted, has been prepared for examination under their guidance. The Principal Supervisor must also confirm that the student has satisfied the requirements of the programme, including any taught modules as well as research activity.

Once a properly registered and fees compliant candidate has submitted copies of the thesis for examination, they will continue to be registered as a student until such time that the examination has been completed and the award is authorised by the Academic Council Committee on Examinations. The registration status of candidates from the point at which the thesis is submitted shall be **'For Assessment' (FA)**. A candidate with a registration status of 'For Assessment' shall not be liable for tuition fees, but their student card shall be extended and they will have access to University facilities in order to prepare for the *viva voce* examination and to complete papers for publication, normally until the end of the term.

¹⁵ For students on the MD Degree programme, the MD Committee and Graduate School Board are responsible for deciding applications for extension and permission to continue in the programme.

¹⁶ The Extension application form can be found at <http://www.ucd.ie/registry/academicsecretariat/pol.htm#g>

¹⁷ The Permission to continue in the programme form can be found at <http://www.ucd.ie/registry/academicsecretariat/pol.htm#g>

¹⁸ <http://www.ucd.ie/registry/adminservices/fees/index.html>

¹⁹ <http://www.ucd.ie/registry/academicsecretariat/pol.htm> – includes information and policy on Leave of Absence and Withdrawal.



6. Examination of the Graduate Research Degree Thesis

The University shall establish an Examination Committee to assess the student on the basis of the thesis submitted and to make a recommendation on the award (or otherwise) of the degree of Research Masters, Doctor of Medicine, Doctor of Philosophy, Doctor of Nursing or Doctor of Midwifery. All matters relating to the examination of graduate research degree theses must be treated as confidential. Examiners are not permitted to divulge the content of previously unpublished material contained in a candidate's thesis until such time as the thesis has been deposited in the library and is publicly available. The roles and responsibilities of the various parties involved in the processing and examination of a research thesis are set out as follows:

6.1. Research Masters Thesis Examination

When conducting an examination of the candidate, examiners are encouraged to be cognizant of the learning outcomes associated with the Research Masters degree award (NQAI Level 9).

Table B: UCD Research Masters Degree Award Descriptor

Title	Masters (MLitt, MPhil, MA, MSc, etc)
Class of Award	Major
Purpose	<p>The core of the Research Masters degree award is a coherent programme of supervised research which requires that the student successfully completes Masters-level research, the principal outcome of which is a submitted thesis in acceptable form and deemed to be of a satisfactory standard. The primary purpose of Masters level research is to develop in the student the skills and competencies required to conduct research.</p> <p>The Research Masters degree programme may also include additional personal and professional development elements which develop the skills and competencies required for successful research and/or support the acquisition of generic or transferable skills. This may be provided via specific modules from the advanced educational programme of the University.</p>
Level	9
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.

Source: UCD Level Descriptors

On the request of a Head of School, or at the behest of the examiners, a *viva voce* examination may be arranged. In such instances, the conduct of the *viva voce* examination will normally be held in accordance with the arrangements outlined in section 6.3.2.



6.2. Doctor of Medicine (MD) Thesis Examination

The Chair of the Examination Committee shall arrange for copies of preliminary reports from each examiner, which should include a judgement as to whether or not the thesis is suitable for examination, to be exchanged amongst members of the Examination Committee.

When examining an MD thesis and preparing Examiners' Preliminary Thesis Reports (the details of which are outlined in section 6.3.1 below), examiners are encouraged to be cognizant of the learning outcomes associated with the Doctor of Medicine (MD) degree award, as outlined in section 6.3.2 below).

On the request of the MD Committee, or at the behest of the examiners, a *viva voce* examination may be arranged. The *viva voce* examination will normally be held within two months of it being requested. In such instances, the conduct of the *viva voce* examination will normally be held in accordance with the arrangements outlined in section 6.3.2 below.

6.3. PhD, DN or DM Thesis Examination

The Chair of the Examination Committee shall arrange for copies of preliminary reports from each examiner, which should include a judgment as to whether or not the thesis is suitable for examination, to be exchanged amongst members of the Examination Committee in advance of the *viva voce* examination.

6.3.1. Examiners' Preliminary Thesis Reports

When reading the thesis, examiners should give particular attention to the following points:

The originality of the work described and the theories developed in the thesis;

- The candidate's familiarity with the published work of other authors in related areas;
- The candidate's ability to summarise the work of other authors and to synthesise a theoretical framework within which to position the work described in the thesis;
- The candidate's prose style should be appropriate to the discipline, but clear, simple, unambiguous writing, which is syntactically and grammatically correct, is required of all candidates;
- The methodology adopted by the candidate to address the research topic - Is it accurately and comprehensively described? Is it appropriate to the topic? Is the candidate aware of alternative methodologies which might have been employed? Is the candidate sensitive to any inherent weaknesses in the methodology? Where a novel method has been developed, has it been tested and calibrated appropriately?
- Experimental Design (where appropriate);
- Presentation of the results of the research – Are the results presented in a clear, accessible way? Are tables, figures or plates, where included, adequately annotated and correctly referenced in the text?
- Interpretation of Results – Are the candidate's conclusions reasonable on the basis of the evidence presented? Has the significance of the results been fully appreciated by the candidate? Has the correct statistical analysis been employed (where appropriate) and justifiable conclusions arrived at? Have theories formulated on the basis of the results taken into account relevant findings published by other authors? Has the candidate identified any weaknesses or lacunae in the evidence adduced?
- The bibliography - Is it comprehensive and up-to-date? Are references to the published literature annotated accurately and consistently in a recognised citation style?
- Presentation of the thesis - Is it free of typographical and other errors?
- In examining the DN or DM thesis, the Examination Committee shall also take into consideration the student's performance in the taught and applied professional practice element.
- There should be a clear statement as part of each Examiner's Preliminary Thesis Report indicating that the examiner believes that the thesis is, or is not, suitable for examination.



Where the examiners agree that a thesis is satisfactory for examination, the Examination Committee shall conduct a *viva voce* examination of the candidate. It is the policy of the University that every PhD candidate must be examined through a *viva voce* examination by the Examination Committee. The *viva voce* examination will normally be held within two months of submission of the thesis.

Where the examiners agree that the thesis is not suitable for examination, copies of the Examiners' Preliminary Thesis Reports will be forwarded to the Principal Supervisor and Head of School, who will recommend an appropriate course of action to the candidate.

Where the examiners are not in agreement as to whether the thesis is suitable for examination, the Chair of the Examination Committee will consult with the Chair of the Academic Council Committee on Examinations, who will recommend an appropriate course of action.

6.3.2. Conduct of the *Viva Voce* Examination

The objectives of the *viva voce* examination are to provide an opportunity for the examiners to clarify any issues of fact which may have arisen in the course of the preliminary reading of the thesis, to test the candidate's knowledge of the thesis topic and related areas of research and, as far as possible, to establish the originality of the candidate's work and ideas. The *viva voce* examination also provides an opportunity for the candidate to elaborate on aspects of the research which may not have been included in the thesis and to defend the arguments presented and the ideas developed in the thesis.

The Chair of the Examination Committee shall make the arrangements for the *viva voce* examination. *Viva voce* examinations should normally be held on campus; in exceptional circumstances the examination may be held elsewhere, provided the candidate agrees to the arrangement. Care should be taken in choosing the location for the *viva voce* examination to ensure that the examination can be conducted in a relaxed and comfortable atmosphere without risk of interruptions or extraneous noise. Examiners and the candidate should be reminded to switch off phones before the commencement of the examination.

The extern examiner(s) shall play the major role in the *viva voce* examination. The extern examiner(s) should lead the discussion with the candidate and explore the strengths and weaknesses of the research work and the thesis. The extern examiner(s) should also test the candidate's knowledge of the field and familiarity with recent publications in the area.

When conducting an examination of the candidate, examiners are encouraged to be cognizant of the learning outcomes associated with the Doctor of Medicine (MD), Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), Doctor of Nursing (DN) and Doctor of Midwifery (DM) degree awards (NQAI Level 10). The UCD Doctoral Award Descriptor is based on existing guidelines such as the NFQ Level 10 Indicators, the NQAI Level 10 "Dublin Descriptors" and the IUA PhD Graduate Skills Statement. In addition, the IUQB *National Guidelines of Good Practice in the Organisation of PhD Programmes in Irish Universities*²⁰ and the Government's *Strategy for Science, Technology and Innovation (2006-2013)*²¹ provide an extensive review and analysis of the role of doctoral education in Irish universities and Irish society more generally.

²⁰ See http://www.iuqb.ie/info/good_practice_guides.aspx?article=59507a1a-0ffd-4090-a124-bb1df04bc566

²¹ See <http://www.entemp.ie/publications/science/2006/sciencestrategy.pdf>



Table C: UCD Doctoral Degree Award Descriptor

Source: UCD Level Descriptors, NFQ Level 10 Indicators, the NQAI Level 10 "Dublin Descriptors" and the IUA PhD Graduate Skills Statement

Title	Doctor (MD, PhD, DN, DM)
Class of Award	Major
Purpose	This award is characterised by a significant original contribution to scholarship, based largely on a major research project which is also complemented by the development of a range of transferable and professional skills. It may be used for career progression to advanced levels of academia and research.
Level	10
Volume	Large
Knowledge – breadth	A coherent understanding of the problems at the forefront of knowledge and potential approaches and solutions, as well as in-depth knowledge of the relevant scholarship in a particular field or discipline.
Knowledge – kind	A contribution through original research which extends the frontiers of knowledge by developing a substantial body of work, some of which merits national or international refereed publication.
Know-how and skill – range	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The capacity to recognise and evaluate problems; • Original autonomous thinking; • Capacity for critical analysis, reflection and evaluation; • Understanding and application of basic principles of project and time management, presentation skills and working in a collaborative capacity.
Know-how and skill – selectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical analysis, evaluation and synthesis of new and complex ideas; • Formulation and application of solutions to research problems and effective interpretation of results; • Ability to promote, within academic and professional contexts, technological, social or cultural advancement in a knowledge-based society.
Competence – context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make a significant contribution to the application of knowledge and skill, including in novel contexts; • Exercise personal responsibility and largely autonomous initiative in complex and unpredictable situations, in professional or equivalent contexts.
Competence – role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate results of research and innovation to peers; • Engage in critical dialogue both within academia and in other relevant contexts; Lead and originate complex social processes.
Competence – learning to learn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ability to reflect on the process of learning and achievement and a capacity to plan for personal, educational and career development; • Learn to critique the broader implications of applying knowledge to particular contexts.
Competence – insight	Critical awareness of the global intellectual, social and cultural implications of developments in their own and other's area of research and expertise.
Progression & Transfer	None
Articulation	The Degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) is awarded following successful completion of a programme of supervised research and advanced education and training. This programme may include articulation with a taught or research Masters (NQAI Level 9) programme, where there are in existence formal processes to assess the progress of a candidate and their suitability for advanced doctoral research and training.

6.4. Post-Examination Procedures

When the examination is complete, if all examiners are in agreement, on the nomination of the Chair of the Examination Committee, the internal examiner shall compile a joint report – on behalf of all examiners - on the academic standard of the thesis and the candidate's performance in the *viva voce* examination (where relevant). In writing their final report, the examiners should bear in mind that the report will be considered by the Academic Council Committee on Examinations and that not all of its members will be expert in the subject matter of the thesis.



The report should include the following;

- A brief description, in non-technical terms, of the work presented in the thesis and an outline of its principal conclusions.
- A brief assessment of the candidate's knowledge and comprehension of the background to the research topic and the work of other authors in related fields.
- The examiners should comment broadly on the strengths and weaknesses of the research and of the theoretical framework developed by the candidate in the thesis and at the *viva voce* examination (where relevant).
- The examiner should also indicate whether the thesis is worthy of publication, in whole or in part.
- The quality of the presentation of the thesis should be referred to in the report.

It is important that there should be consistency between the opinions expressed in the report and the examiners' recommendation in relation to the award of the degree. For example, if several negative comments are included in a report which recommends the award of the degree, the examiners should take care to indicate the strengths of the work which outweigh its weaknesses and which persuaded them to recommend that the degree be awarded.

The Degree Report shall include a recommendation to:

- (a) Award the [Research Masters / MD / PhD / DN / DM] degree – no corrections required
- (b) Award the [Research Masters / MD / PhD / DN / DM] degree – subject to corrections
- (c) Revise and submit the thesis for re-examination
- (d) Not award the [Research Masters / MD / PhD / DN / DM] degree

The Academic Council Committee on Examinations will decide, on the basis of the report(s) and where necessary clarification or correspondence with the examiners, to authorise or not to authorise the award of the degree. A candidate is entitled to a copy of the examiners' degree report(s) following the authorisation or otherwise of the award of the degree by the Academic Council Committee on Examination.

6.4.1. Post Examination Procedures: Unanimous Recommendation to Award Degree

Where the examiners unanimously recommend award of the graduate research degree, the Examination Committee shall submit a joint report, via the Chair of the Examination Committee, to the Academic Council Committee on Examinations indicating their opinion on the quality of the thesis and of the research on which it is based, and recommending the award of the degree. Where, in the opinion of the examiners, corrections are required, the Chair of the Examination Committee (or nominee – normally an internal examiner) shall be responsible for ensuring that any corrections have been made to the thesis before award of the degree is authorised by the Academic Council Committee on Examinations. The Chair of the Examination Committee shall inform the candidate and the Principal Supervisor that they have recommended the award of the degree subject to any corrections being made (where required) and to the approval of the Academic Council Committee on Examinations.

6.4.2. Post Examination Procedures: Unanimous Recommendation not to Award Degree

- Where the examiners unanimously recommend that the graduate research degree not be awarded, the Examination Committee shall submit a joint report, via the Chair of the Examination Committee, to the Academic Council Committee on Examinations indicating their opinion on the quality of the thesis and of the research on which it is based and indicating the areas of weakness which led to the decision not to recommend the award of the degree.
- The report may include advice to the candidate on ways in which the thesis, or the research on which it is based, could be substantially revised to a standard which might be suitable for re-examination for the award of the degree or another award.
- The Chair of the Examination Committee shall inform the candidate and the Principal Supervisor that the award is not recommended.



- The Chair of the Examination Committee shall notify the Academic Council Committee on Examinations that the Examination Committee has not recommended the award of the degree and the Academic Council Committee on Examinations shall inform the candidate of the decision of the Examination Committee.
- A candidate may appeal this decision of the Academic Council Committee on Examinations to the Academic Council Committee on Assessment Appeal.

6.4.3. Post Examination Procedures: No Unanimous Recommendation

Where the examiners are in disagreement and cannot unanimously recommend that the degree be awarded, members of the Examination Committee shall submit separate reports to the Academic Council Committee on Examinations. The Chair of the Examination Committee shall inform the candidate and the Principal Supervisor that the Examination Committee has not made a unanimous decision on the award of the degree and that the matter has been recommended to the Academic Council Committee on Examinations for adjudication. The Academic Council Committee on Examinations may decide to:

- (a) Award the [Research Masters / MD/ PhD / DN / DM] degree – no corrections required
- (b) Award the [Research Masters / MD/ PhD / DN / DM] degree – subject to corrections
- (c) Revise and submit the thesis for re-examination
- (d) Not award the [Research Masters / MD/ PhD / DN / DM] degree

A candidate may appeal this decision of the Academic Council Committee on Examinations to the Academic Council Committee on Assessment Appeals.

6.5. Thesis Revisions

Where corrections to the thesis are required by the examiners, the Chair of the Examination Committee (or nominee – normally an internal examiner) shall communicate the required corrections to the candidate **indicating the timeline** within which the corrections should be completed (normally no longer than the end of the term in which the examination was held). Candidates will retain the registration status of 'For Assessment' during the period in which corrections must be made, however, failure to complete the corrections within the allocated timeframe may result in a change to the student's registration status which may make them liable for tuition fees. The **Thesis Corrections Sign Off Form** (see Appendix x) shall be completed by the nominated examiner once the corrections have been satisfactorily completed by the candidate. The signed form shall be given to the student for inclusion with the final hard-bound copy of the thesis for submission to UCD Registry.

Where the candidate is required to revise and submit the thesis for re-examination, the Chair of the Examination Committee shall, with the agreement of the other members of the Examination Committee, indicate the timeline within which such major revisions shall be undertaken and the student must register as normal and will be liable for fees for this period. Upon submission of the thesis for re-examination, the Examination Committee shall be re-convened by the Chair of the Examination Committee and a decision taken on the necessity of holding a second *viva voce* examination, prior to the completion of the final thesis report.

6.6. Submission of Final Thesis

While the thesis may be submitted for examination in softbound format, the degree will not be awarded until a hard-bound copy of the thesis, incorporating any changes and corrections required by the examiners, has been lodged by the candidate with the Student Desk, UCD Registry. As a courtesy, the candidate shall normally also present a hard-bound copy of the thesis to the Principal Supervisor and/or the Head of School.

A hard-bound copy of the thesis, incorporating any corrections required by the examiners - together with the **Thesis Corrections Sign Off Form** - (see Appendix x), must be submitted to UCD Registry before the Academic Council Committee on Examinations will consider the award of the degree.



6.7. Degree Award and Conferring

Once the Academic Council Committee on Examinations has authorised the award of the degree, Assessment and the Conferring Unit shall complete their responsibilities as set out in sections 7.7 and 7.9.

6.8. Deposition of the Thesis in the UCD Library

Following each meeting of the Academic Council Committee on Examinations, Assessment, UCD Registry shall notify candidates of the authorisation of the award of the degree by the Academic Council Committee on Examinations and send them a **Graduate Research Degree Thesis – Deposition in the Library Form**. Candidates are required to indicate on the form whether the hard-bound copy should be deposited and made available immediately under conditions laid down by the University, or whether access to it should be deferred, so that it is not available for consultation for a period agreed upon by the author and the University (not to exceed one year).

All issues relating to intellectual property will be subject to the University's practices and policies.

7. Roles and Responsibilities of the Key Parties

The roles and responsibilities of the key parties – the candidate, the Principal Supervisor, the Head of School, the Chair of the Examination Committee, the internal examiner(s), the extern examiner(s), UCD Registry, the Academic Council Committee on Examinations (ACCE), the Conferring Unit and the Librarian – are defined as follows:

7.1. Responsibilities of the Candidate

In order to submit a thesis for examination the candidate must:

- 7.1.1. Be properly registered and fees compliant.
- 7.1.2. Be fully cognisant of all relevant regulations, policies and codes of practice that relate to their graduate research programme of study and their graduate research degree thesis.
- 7.1.3. Be aware of the thesis submission deadline and the implications of not being able to meet the deadline, and the options available to them where they are not able to meet the submission deadline.
- 7.1.4. Have met and worked productively with their Principal Supervisor (and members of their Research Masters Panel or Doctoral Studies Panel) in the conduct of their research.
- 7.1.5. Have satisfied the requirements of the degree programme that they are registered for, prior to submission of their thesis.
- 7.1.6. Complete and sign the **Research Degree Examination Form** (Appendix iv), and gain approval for the submission of the thesis for examination by their Principal Supervisor, whom must also sign the Research Degree Examination Form.
- 7.1.7. Submit the appropriate number of copies of the thesis in softbound format, along with a completed copy of the **Research Degree Examination Form** (Appendix iv), confirming that the research work is the candidate's own work and has been undertaken under the direction of the Principal Supervisor.
- 7.1.8. Carry out corrections or substantial revisions as required by the Examination Committee.
- 7.1.9. Submit final hard-bound and electronic copies of the thesis to the Student Desk, UCD Registry for deposition in the library.

7.2. Responsibilities of the Principal Supervisor

In order to facilitate a candidate's submission of a graduate research degree thesis for examination, the Principal Supervisor shall:



- 7.2.1. Inform the Head of School of the necessity to appoint examiners in sufficient time for approval before the candidate submits their thesis.
- 7.2.2. Ensure that the candidate is properly registered and fees compliant prior to submission.
- 7.2.3. Make the candidate aware of all relevant regulations, policies and codes of practice that relate to their graduate research programme of study and their particular graduate research degree thesis.
- 7.2.4. Be aware of the thesis submission deadline and the implications for a candidate of not being able to meet the deadline, and the options available to them where they are not able to meet the submission deadline.
- 7.2.5. Oversee the candidate's research training, the conduct of the student-supervisor relationship and management of the candidate's research progress.
- 7.2.6. Liaise, as necessary, with the members of the Research Masters Panel or Doctoral Studies Panel in the course of preparing the candidate for submission of their graduate research degree thesis.
- 7.2.7. Provide appropriate intellectual and pedagogical advice and support for the candidate, so that they have reached the point where they can submit their thesis with the approval of the Principal Supervisor and Research Masters Panel or Doctoral Studies Panel and the Head of School.
- 7.2.8. When satisfied that the candidate's thesis is of a sufficient standard for submission and that all compliance issues are addressed, sign a completed copy of the **Research Degree Examination Form** (Appendix iv) and return this form to the candidate.

7.3. Responsibilities of the Head of School

In order to facilitate a candidate's submission of a graduate research degree thesis for examination, the Head of School shall:

- 7.3.1. Make the Principal Supervisor and candidate aware of all relevant regulations, policies and codes of practice that relate to the graduate research programme of study.
- 7.3.2. Where appropriate, make School-wide recommendations regarding the length and format of graduate research degree theses.
- 7.3.3. Propose the appointment of the relevant internal examiner(s) to the College Graduate School Board, upon whose recommendation the appointment may be made by the Academic Council Committee on Examinations, ensuring that such appointments are made at least three months prior to submission by the candidate of the graduate research degree thesis.
- 7.3.4. Propose the appointment of the relevant extern examiner(s) – supported by summary CV information - to the College Graduate School Board, upon whose recommendation, and the recommendation of the Academic Council Committee on Examinations, the appointment may be made by the National University of Ireland, ensuring that such appointments are made at least three months prior to submission by the candidate of the graduate research degree thesis.
- 7.3.5. Act, for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, as the Chair of the Examination Committee or designate a nominee to carry out this responsibility. For the Degree of Doctor of Medicine, the Head of the School of Medicine and Medical Science, should also act as the Chair of the Examination Committee or designate a nominee to carry out this responsibility.

In carrying out these responsibilities, the Head of School shall consult, where appropriate, with the relevant Head of Subject.

7.4. Responsibilities of the Chair of the Examination Committee

Upon submission of the thesis for examination, the Chair of the Examination Committee shall:



- 7.4.1. Arrange for the reports from each examiner to be exchanged amongst all members of the Examination Committee.
- 7.4.2. Convene and conduct, where applicable, the *viva voce* examination, normally within two months of the submission of the thesis.
- 7.4.3. Notify the candidate and the Principal Supervisor of the recommendation of the Examination Committee which is being made to the Academic Council Committee on Examinations.
- 7.4.4. Oversee the compilation of and submit a joint report (on behalf of all examiners) on the appropriate report form (see Appendices v, vi, vii, viii, and ix), including their signature on the section for Chair, to the Academic Council Committee on Examinations stipulating that they either unanimously recommend that the degree be awarded, or unanimously recommend that the degree not be awarded.²²
- 7.4.5. Ensure (where relevant) that all necessary corrections have been made to the thesis, and submit verification to Assessment, UCD Registry via the **Thesis Corrections Sign Off Form** (Appendix x) to confirm that any such corrections have been made. This task may be delegated to an internal examiner.
- 7.4.6. Make available to the student, a copy of the examiners' degree report(s) following the authorisation or otherwise of the award of the degree by the ACCE.

7.5. Responsibilities of the Internal Examiner

In support of the examination process, the internal examiner shall:

- 7.5.1. Comply with the examination guidelines and procedures outlined in section 6.
- 7.5.2. In the case of the Research Masters Degree, act as the Chair of the Examination Committee.
- 7.5.3. For the PhD and MD degrees, submit a preliminary report on whether the thesis is suitable for examination to the Chair of the Examination Committee.
- 7.5.4. Where examiners unanimously recommend award of the degree, on the nomination of the Chair of the Examination Committee, compile a joint degree report on behalf of all examiners.
- 7.5.5. Where the examiners are in disagreement and cannot unanimously recommend that the degree be awarded, submit a separate report to the Academic Council Committee on Examinations.
- 7.5.6. On the nomination of the Chair of the Examination Committee, ensure that all required corrections have been made to the thesis, and submit verification of this to the Chair of the Examination Committee, before award of the degree is authorised by the Academic Council Committee on Examinations.

7.6. Responsibilities of the Extern Examiner

In support of the examination process, the extern examiner shall:

- 7.6.1. Comply with the examination guidelines and procedures outlined in section 6.
- 7.6.2. For the PhD and MD degrees, submit a preliminary report on whether the thesis is suitable for examination to the Chair of the Examination Committee.
- 7.6.3. Play the major role in the *viva voce* examination.
- 7.6.4. Where examiners unanimously recommend award of the degree, liaise with the nominated internal examiner in compiling a joint degree report on behalf of all examiners.

²² Reports should be submitted 10 days in advance of the published dates of the Academic Council Committee on Examinations; further details are available at <https://intranet.ucd.ie/registry/assessment/acce.html> (staff require their UCD Connect log in to access this webpage).



- 7.6.5.** Where the examiners are in disagreement and cannot unanimously recommend that the degree be awarded, submit a separate report to the Academic Council Committee on Examinations.
- 7.6.6.** Continue in the role of extern examiner, in the situation where a candidate is required to revise and submit a thesis for re-examination.

7.7. Responsibilities of UCD Registry

Once a thesis has been submitted to the Student Desk, UCD Registry:

- 7.7.1.** The Student Desk will record the date of submission of the thesis on the candidate's record and provide a receipt of submission to the candidate.
- 7.7.2.** The Student Desk will adjust the registration status of the candidate to 'For Assessment' (FA).
- 7.7.3.** The Student Desk will deliver the thesis to Assessment, and Assessment will sign the appropriate form confirming receipt of the thesis.
- 7.7.4.** Assessment shall forward copies of the thesis to all members of the Examination Committee, together with the **Research Masters Degree Report** (Appendix v) or **MD Degree Report** (Appendix vi) or **PhD Degree Report** (Appendix vii (pre-2006) or viii (post-2006) or **DN/DM Degree Report** (Appendix ix), normally within ten working days of receipt of the thesis, provided the Examination Committee has been appointed by the ACCE.
- 7.7.5.** Assessment shall notify the Chair of the Examination Committee and Principal Supervisor confirming that the thesis has been sent to all members of the Examination Committee.
- 7.7.6.** Assessment shall provide all examination reports and confirmation of completed corrections to the Academic Council Committee on Examinations.
- 7.7.7.** Assessment shall record the date of the authorisation of the award of the degree and notify the candidate and the Conferring Unit of the award of the degree.

7.8. Responsibilities of the Academic Council Committee on Examinations (ACCE)

The ACCE supports the Academic Council in all assessment related matters. The ACCE acts on the delegated authority of Academic Council, and with reference to examination of theses in graduate research programmes, the ACCE has specific functions including:

- 7.8.1.** Appointment of Internal Examiners on behalf of the Academic Council
- 7.8.2.** Nomination of Extern Examiners (both Subject and Special) to the NUI for appointment;
- 7.8.3.** Act on behalf of the University as an Examination Board for all doctoral and research degrees (PhDs, Professional Doctorates, Research Masters and MDs) involving:
- a) Award, on behalf of the University, all research degrees;
 - b) Adjudicate in cases where there is disagreement among examiners in relation to the award of a research degree.

7.9. Responsibilities of the Conferring Unit

Upon receipt of notification from Assessment, UCD Registry, the Conferring Unit shall:

- 7.9.1.** Update the record of the candidate, including changing their status to that of graduand.
- 7.9.2.** Send the graduand, by post, an information pack which includes details regarding the conferring ceremony, as well as invitations.



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- 7.9.3.** Send a list of graduands to the relevant Head of School and confirm on the list who will be in attendance at the Conferring Ceremony.²³

7.10. Responsibilities of the Librarian

Upon award of the degree, the Librarian shall:

- 7.10.1.** Accept the final hard-bound copy of the thesis from Assessment. In addition, the Librarian will accept a signed **Graduate Research Degree Thesis – Deposition in the Library Form** from the candidate.
- 7.10.2.** Add the hard-bound copy to the Library's theses collections. Details of the thesis are made publicly available via the Library's online catalogue and OCLC's WorldCat. In addition, details of the thesis are supplied to Expert Information Ltd for inclusion on the 'Index To Theses' database.
- 7.10.3.** Provide a thesis consultation service. Theses are, subject to the author's consent, made available for consultation purposes within the Library only. In addition, theses are made available for loan to other academic libraries via the Inter-Library Loans service on condition that they are used in the borrowing library only.
- 7.10.4.** Accept an electronic copy of the thesis.

²³ Further details regarding conferring are available at www.ucd.ie/confer/



Tracking Information

Personnel

Role	Name	e-mail	tel
Academic Sponsor, Deputy Registrar for Graduate Studies	Prof Julie Berndsen	julie.berndsen@ucd.ie	2493
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Director of Assessment, UCD Registry	Ms. Karen O'Shea	karen.oshea@ucd.ie	1459
Policy Officer	Michael Kennedy	michael.e.kennedy@ucd.ie	1081
Policy Officer	Ciarán Ó hUltacháin	ciaran.ohultachain@ucd.ie	1652

Version History

Version	Date	Summary of Changes	Changed by
1.0	25 Apr 07	First draft	Michael Kennedy
1.1	27 Apr 07	Second draft	Michael Kennedy
1.2		Review by Academic Policy Unit and Assessment Unit, UCD Registry	Michael Kennedy / Ciarán Ó hUltacháin
1.3	20 Jun 08	Additional review by Academic Policy Unit and Assessment Unit, UCD Registry	Michael Kennedy / Ciarán Ó hUltacháin
1.4	04 Jul 08 08 Aug 08	Changes made subsequent to meeting of Policy Working Group Additional wording on fees compliance in Section 4	Michael Kennedy Ciarán Ó hUltacháin
1.5	28 Oct 08	Additional changes following decision to have theses submitted to Assessment, UCD Registry	Michael Kennedy
1.6	02 Dec 08	Changes made subsequent to meeting of Policy Working Group, including significant amendment to the relevant forms in the appendices.	Michael Kennedy
1.7	10 Dec 08	Changes made subsequent to meeting with Graduate School Directors (Padraig Dunne, Ben Tonra) and discussion with Marc Caball.	Michael Kennedy
1.8	10 Feb 09	Changes made following input from the Human Sciences and Life Sciences Graduate School Boards.	Michael Kennedy
1.9	07 Apr 09	Changes made following decision (by Dean of Academic Affairs and Deputy Registrar for Graduate Studies) to include policy and procedures for examination of the thesis.	Michael Kennedy
1.10	16 Apr 09	Additional changes following meeting of Policy Working Group	Michael Kennedy
1.11	27 May 09	Additional changes following meeting of Policy Working Group	Michael Kennedy
1.12	18 Jun 09	Additional changes following meeting of Policy Working Group	Michael Kennedy
1.12-1.17	Sept-Oct 09	Additional changes following discussions between Academic Secretariat and Assessment	Michael Kennedy / Ciarán Ó hUltacháin
1.18-1.19	20 Oct 09	Additional changes following meeting with Chair of the Academic Council	Michael Kennedy



		Committee on Examinations (Prof Michael Ryan)	
1.20	21 Jan 10	Additional changes following meeting of Academic Council Committee on Examinations	Elaine Williams / Michael Kennedy
1.21	22 Feb 10	Additional changes following feedback from Human Sciences	Michael Kennedy
1.22-1.23	26 Feb 10 & 05 Mar 10	Additional changes following feedback from M. Ryan, P. Dunne and M. Sinnott and meeting with staff from Registry.	Michael Kennedy
1.24	26 Mar 10	Additional changes following discussion at 25 March UGPB, as well as changes made following submission of written comments from C. O'Connor.	Michael Kennedy
1.25-1.27	01 April 10	Additional changes following April 2010 meeting of Academic Council Committee on Examinations	Ciarán Ó hUltacháin
1.28	15 April 10	Additional minor changes made by the Chair of the ACCE	Michael Ryan
1.29	23 April 10	Additional minor changes following discussion at AC meeting of 23 April 2010. Final APPROVED version.	Michael Kennedy
1.30	8 Dec 10	Additional minor changes relating to changes to the Extensions Policy and their integration with this policy.	Martina Boyle

Consultation and Approvals Plan

Committee/Group	Date		Version	Action	Decision
	Meeting	Circulation			
Policy Working Group	03 Jul 08	26 Jun 08	1.3	Discussion	Changes made
Graduate School Directors	08 Dec 08	03 Dec 08	1.6	Discussion	Changes made
Graduate School Boards	misc.	12 Dec 08	1.7	Discussion	Changes made
Academic Council Committee on Examinations	10 Dec 09	3 Dec 09	1.19	Discussion	Changes made
Graduate School Directors		22 Jan 09	1.20	Feedback received (HumSci)	Changes made
UCD Registry staff	25 Feb 10	22 Feb 10	1.21	Discussion	Changes made
UGPB	25 Mar 10	18 Mar 10	1.23	Discussion	Changes made
Academic Council Committee on Examinations	01 Apr 10	30 Mar 10	1.25	Discussion	Changes made
Academic Council	23 Apr 10	15 Apr 10	1.28	Submitted for approval	Approved

Tracking Information for Section 4: Pre-thesis Submission: Extension

Personnel

Role	Name	e-mail	tel
Academic Sponsor and Chair	Dr. Eilis Hennessy	eilis.hennessy@ucd.ie	8362
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Graduate School Manager, College of Life Sciences	Ms Deirbhle Carroll	deirbhle.carroll@ucd.ie	2633
Programme Office Director, Architecture & Engineering Programme Offices	Ms Sue Philpott	sue.philpott@ucd.ie	1864



Director of Academic Secretariat, UCD Registry	Dr. Sinéad Critchley	sinead.critchley@ucd.ie	1344
Director of Administrative Services, UCD Registry	Mr. Michael Sinnott	michael.sinnott@ucd.ie	1634
Policy Officer	Ms Martina Boyle	martina.boyle@ucd.ie	1535

Version History

Version	Date	Summary of Changes	Changed by
1.0	05.07.2010	First draft	Martina Boyle
1.1	09.07.2010	Second draft	Martina Boyle
1.2	13.07.2010	Revised following meeting between Pdraig Dunne, Deirbhle Carroll and Martina Boyle	Martina Boyle
1.3	06.08.2010	Revised following Policy Working Group meeting	Martina Boyle
1.4	10.08.2010	Revised following Policy Working Group consideration	Martina Boyle
1.5	24.08.2010 and 31.08.2010	Revised following Policy Working Group consideration of feedback received; and following subsequent meeting between Eilis Hennessy and Martina Boyle	Martina Boyle
1.6	07.09.2010	Revised following Policy Working Group consideration	Martina Boyle
1.7	21.10.2010	Minor revision following Policy Working Group consideration (UGPB feedback)	Martina Boyle

Consultation and Approvals Plan

Committee/Group	Date of Consultation	Version	Action Sought	Decision
Graduate School Boards, Graduate Taught Programme Boards, Programme Board Chairs, Programme Boards with responsibility for graduate programmes, Graduate School Managers, School Graduate Administrators, Programme Office Directors, Students' Union Education Officer and Registry Coordinating Group	12.08.2010 (email circulation)	1.4	Review and feedback	Feedback informed Working Group discussions and recommendations (24.08.2010)
UGPB	30.09.2010	1.6	Comment and discussion	Policy returned to the working group for further consideration
UGPB	25.11.2010	1.7	Comment and discussion	Recommended to Academic Council
Academic Council	08.12.2010	1.7	Submitted for approval	Approved





Sample Thesis Title: The Sample Title of a Research
Masters or Doctoral Thesis

Volume 1 of 2

Joe Bloggs, BA, MA

The thesis is submitted to University College Dublin in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of [Research Masters / Doctor of Medicine / Doctor of Philosophy / Doctor of Nursing / Doctor of Midwifery] in ...

School of [Research Masters / Doctoral] Studies

Head of School: Professor Head of School

Principal Supervisor: Professor [Research Masters / Doctoral] Thesis Supervisor

[Research Masters / Doctoral Studies] Panel Membership:

Professor A
Professor B
Professor C

August 2010

Appendix (ii) – Guidance notes on completing the Extenuating Circumstances Application Form for Extension of Thesis Submission Deadline

All forms and reports should be typed and are available to download from <http://www.ucd.ie/registry/academicsecretariat/pol.htm#g>

Before completing the Extenuating Circumstances Application Form for Extension of Thesis Submission Deadline please note:

An extension is a variation to the thesis submission deadline that compensates for a period of time where a student has paid full fees but has been unable to pursue studies for **extenuating personal, medical or academic circumstances**. An application for an extension will only be considered where there are such extenuating circumstances¹.

All applications should be submitted to the Graduate School Board before the thesis submission deadline² and the length of an extension is equivalent to the period of time where a student has paid full fees but has been unable to pursue studies for extenuating circumstances. Retrospective applications may be considered only in exceptional cases, and it is at the discretion of the Graduate School Board whether or not to consider late applications.

Students should communicate with their Principal Supervisor as soon as is reasonably possible, well in advance of their thesis submission deadline.

Students should ensure that they read section 4 (*Pre-thesis submission: Extension*) in the *Policy on Theses in Graduate Research Programmes* before completing this form.

When should this form be submitted?

The completed form should be returned to the School Office **as soon as possible and in advance of the thesis submission deadline**.

Appropriate original supporting evidence must be supplied with the application e.g. in the case of medical extenuating circumstances, an original medical certificate supplied by a registered medical practitioner or other health professional.

Please note: original documentation supplied is non-returnable. It is recommended that students retain a copy of the application and evidence for their records.

¹ **Examples of specific types of extenuating circumstances** that may be considered acceptable justification, as well as examples of what may not normally be considered acceptable justification are outlined in the FAQ document for staff and students, *FAQ: policies on theses in graduate programmes*.

² Information regarding the submission deadline for graduate research theses is available on the Fees and Grants section of the Registry website (http://www.ucd.ie/registry/adminservices/fees/theses_submission.htm).

Appendix (iii) – Guidance notes on completing the Permission to Continue in the Programme Application Form

All forms and reports should be typed and are available to download from <http://www.ucd.ie/registry/academicsecretariat/pol.htm#g>

Before completing this form please note

A student on a graduate research programme applies for permission to continue in their programme beyond the prescribed period of registration¹ where they have not submitted their thesis by their submission deadline² and have not had extenuating personal, medical or academic circumstances³.

All applications for permission to continue in the programme beyond the prescribed period of registration must be approved by the relevant School and Graduate School Board. Retrospective applications may be considered only in exceptional cases, and it is at the discretion of the Graduate School Board whether or not to consider a late application.

Students should communicate with their Principal Supervisor as soon as is reasonably possible should they perceive that they will not be able to submit by the prescribed deadline and will need to continue in their programme (beyond the prescribed period of registration).

Students should ensure that they read section 4 (*Pre-thesis submission: Extension*) in the *Policy on Theses in Graduate Research Programmes* before completing this form.

When should this form be submitted?

The completed form should be returned to the School Office **as soon as possible and normally in advance of the thesis submission deadline**.

Duration

Each application to continue in the programme is made for a period no shorter than a term and no longer than three terms in duration.

¹ What is the prescribed period of programme registration for a graduate research student?

Prescribed period of registration refers to the period of time during which a research degree student is expected to be registered to their programme of study as laid down in the relevant regulations.

Please note: for the purposes of this policy, three terms is equivalent to one calendar year.

For **Research Masters students**, the prescribed period of registration will not normally be less than 1 or more than 2 calendar years for a full-time student, and will not normally be less than 2 or more than 4 calendar years for a part-time student. Where a full-time student needs to register into Year 3 (or a part-time student into Year 5) they must apply to continue in the programme.

The prescribed period for a **PhD Degree post-2006** will not normally be less than 3 or more than 4 calendar years for a full-time student, and will not normally be less than 5 or more than 6 calendar years for a part-time student, and for a **PhD Degree pre-2006** the maximum period of registration is 6 calendar years for a full-time student. Where a full-time post-2006 student needs to register into Year 5 (or a part-time student into Year 7) they must apply to continue in the programme. Where a full-time pre-2006 student needs to register into Year 7 (they must apply to continue in the programme).

The prescribed period of registration for the **MD Degree** will normally be 2 years for a full-time student and 4 years for a part-time student. Where a full-time student needs to register into Year 3 (or a part-time student into Year 5) they must apply to continue in the programme.

² Information regarding the submission deadline for graduate research theses is available on the Fees and Grants section of the Registry website (http://www.ucd.ie/registry/adminservices/fees/thesis_submission.htm).

³ Where a student has had extenuating circumstances they should apply for an extension (or, in relation to taught modules, they should apply under the *Policy on Extenuating Circumstances* (<http://www.ucd.ie/registry/academicsecretariat/pol.htm#e>)).

Appendix (iv) – Research Degree Examination Form

All forms and reports should be typed and are available to download from <https://intranet.ucd.ie/registry/assessment/acce.html>



University College Dublin
An Coláiste Ollscoile, Baile Átha Cliath

RESEARCH DEGREE EXAMINATION FORM

This form should be completed (typed) by the candidate and signed by the candidate and Principal Supervisor and submitted together with the appropriate number of copies of the thesis to the Student Desk, UCD Registry.

Candidate Name: Telephone No.:
Student Number: Email Address:
School: Graduate School:
Programme:
(e.g. PhD, DN, DM, MLitt, MSc, MD, DPsych, including also details of Thematic Doctoral Programme where applicable)
Principal Supervisor:
I was accepted as a candidate for the Degree of:
(e.g. Master of Science, Doctor of Medicine, Doctor of Philosophy, Doctor of Nursing, Doctor of Midwifery)
For a programme commencing on:
TITLE OF THESIS:

To be completed by Candidate:

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.

Candidate Name (printed):

Fees compliant (no outstanding fees) Registered UCD student Credit requirements fulfilled
(please tick boxes to confirm that you are a registered student, fees compliant and that you have satisfied your programme credit requirements, which may include taught modules)

Candidate Signature:

Date:

To be completed by the Principal Supervisor

I hereby confirm my approval, for examination, of the final draft of the Graduate Research Degree Thesis, the details of which are listed above. Furthermore, I confirm that the candidate has successfully satisfied the credit requirements of the programme – which includes achieving the required number of credits in taught modules – if applicable to the programme.

Principal Supervisor Signature:

Date:

Principal Supervisor email (required):

To be completed by Student Desk:

Number of copies received:

Received by (print name):

Date:

Appendix (v) – Research Masters Degree Report

All forms and reports should be typed and are available to download from <https://intranet.ucd.ie/registry/assessment/acce.html>

An Coláiste Ollscoile, Baile Átha Cliath

University College Dublin

RESEARCH MASTERS DEGREE

REPORT

Candidate:

Student No:

College:

UCD School:

Supervisor:

Degree of:

Thesis title:

Recommendation

Award Degree (no corrections required)

Award Degree (subject to corrections)

Proposed timeline for corrections _____

Revise and submit the thesis for re-examination

Do not award Degree

PLEASE INCLUDE TYPED REPORT ON NEXT PAGE

To be completed by the Examiners:

We confirm that unless otherwise stated, the attached report is a joint report agreed by all the examiners.

Print Name _____ Signed _____

(Internal Examiner 1)

Print Name _____ Signed _____

(Internal Examiner 2 – where appropriate)

Print Name _____ Signed _____

(Extern Examiner)

Print Name _____ Signed _____

(Extern Examiner 2 - where appropriate)

An Coláiste Ollscoile, Baile Átha Cliath

University College Dublin

RESEARCH MASTERS DEGREE

REPORT

(Minimum 200 words)

Print Name _____ Signed _____

(Examiner nominated to compile joint report)

Date: _____

Appendix (vi) – MD Degree Report

All forms and reports should be typed and are available to download from <https://intranet.ucd.ie/registry/assessment/acce.html>

An Coláiste Ollscoile, Baile Átha Cliath

University College Dublin

MD DEGREE

REPORT

Candidate:

Student No:

College:

UCD School:

Supervisor:

Thesis title:

Recommendation

Award MD Degree (no corrections required)

Award MD Degree (subject to corrections)

Proposed timeline for corrections _____

Revise thesis and submit for re-examination

MD Degree should not be awarded

PLEASE INCLUDE TYPED REPORT ON NEXT PAGE

Print Name _____ Signed _____
(Internal Examiner 1)

Print Name _____ Signed _____
(Internal Examiner 2 – where appropriate)

Print Name _____ Signed _____
(Extern Examiner 1)

Print Name _____ Signed _____
(Extern Examiner 2 - where appropriate)

To be completed by Chair of Examination Committee:

I confirm that the examination has been carried out in accordance with the relevant University Regulations, and that the report, unless otherwise stated, is a joint report submitted on behalf of all the examiners.

Print Name _____ Signed _____
CHAIR OF EXAMINATION COMMITTEE

An Coláiste Ollscoile, Baile Átha Cliath

University College Dublin

MD DEGREE

REPORT

(Minimum 500 words)

Print Name _____ Signed _____

(Examiner nominated to compile joint report)

Date _____

Appendix (vii) – PhD Degree Report (pre-2006)

All forms and reports should be typed and are available to download from <https://intranet.ucd.ie/registry/assessment/acce.html>

An Coláiste Ollscoile, Baile Átha Cliath

University College Dublin

THE PhD DEGREE (PRE-2006)

REPORT

Candidate:

Student No:

College:

UCD School:

Supervisor:

Thesis title:

Recommendation

Award Degree (no corrections required)

Award Degree (subject to corrections)

Proposed timeline for corrections _____

Revise thesis and submit for re-examination

Do not award Degree

Is the thesis worthy of publication in whole or in part, as a work of serious scholarship?

Whole

Part

No

Date of Viva Voce Examination: _____

PLEASE INCLUDE TYPED REPORT ON NEXT PAGE

To be completed by the Examiners:

We confirm that unless otherwise stated, the attached report is a joint report agreed by the examiners.

Print Name _____ Signed _____
(Intern Examiner 1)

Print Name _____ Signed _____
(Intern Examiner 2)

Print Name _____ Signed _____
(Extern Examiner 1)

Print Name _____ Signed _____
(Extern Examiner 2 - where appropriate)

An Coláiste Ollscoile, Baile Átha Cliath

University College Dublin

THE PhD DEGREE (PRE-2006)

REPORT

(500 word typed report, please refer, if relevant, to any publications that have arisen from the work)

Please include brief commentary on the viva voce examination:

Print Name _____ Signed _____

(Examiner nominated to compile joint report)

Date _____

Appendix (viii) – PhD Degree Report (post-2006)

All forms and reports should be typed and are available to download from <https://intranet.ucd.ie/registry/assessment/acce.html>

An Coláiste Ollscoile, Baile Átha Cliath

University College Dublin

THE PhD DEGREE (POST-2006)

REPORT

Candidate: _____ Student No: _____

College: _____ School: _____

Supervisor: _____

Thesis title: _____

Recommendation **Award Degree** (no corrections required)
 Award Degree (subject to corrections)
Proposed timeline for corrections _____
 Revise thesis and submit for re-examination
 Do not award Degree

Is the thesis worthy of publication in whole or in part, as a work of serious scholarship?

Whole Part No

Date of Viva Voce Examination: _____

PLEASE INCLUDE TYPED REPORT ON NEXT PAGE

Print Name _____ Signed _____
(Internal Examiner 1)

Print Name _____ Signed _____
(Internal Examiner 2 – where appropriate)

Print Name _____ Signed _____
(Extern Examiner 1)

Print Name _____ Signed _____
(Extern Examiner 2 - where appropriate)

To be completed by Chair of Examination Committee:

I confirm that the examination has been carried out in accordance with the relevant University Regulations, and that the report, unless otherwise stated, is a joint report submitted on behalf of all the examiners.

Print Name _____ Signed _____
CHAIR OF EXAMINATION COMMITTEE

An Coláiste Ollscoile, Baile Átha Cliath

University College Dublin

THE PhD DEGREE (POST-2006)

REPORT

(500 word typed report, please refer, if relevant, to any publications that have arisen from the work)

Please include brief commentary on the viva voce examination:

Print Name _____ Signed _____

(Examiner nominated to compile report)

Date _____

Appendix (ix) – DN/DM Degree Report

All forms and reports should be typed and are available to download from <https://intranet.ucd.ie/registry/assessment/acce.html>

An Coláiste Ollscoile, Baile Átha Cliath

University College Dublin

THE DN/DM DEGREE REPORT

Candidate: _____ Student No: _____

College: _____ School: _____

Supervisor: _____

Thesis title: _____

Recommendation **Award Degree** (no corrections required)

Award Degree (subject to corrections)

Proposed timeline for corrections _____

Revise thesis and submit for re-examination

Do not award Degree

Is the thesis worthy of publication in whole or in part, as a work of serious scholarship?

Whole

Part

No

Date of Viva Voce Examination: _____

PLEASE INCLUDE TYPED REPORT ON NEXT PAGE

Print Name _____ Signed _____
(Internal Examiner 1)

Print Name _____ Signed _____
(Internal Examiner 2 – where appropriate)

Print Name _____ Signed _____
(Extern Examiner 1)

Print Name _____ Signed _____
(Extern Examiner 2 - where appropriate)

To be completed by Chair of Examination Committee:

I confirm that the examination has been carried out in accordance with the relevant University Regulations, and that the report, unless otherwise stated, is a joint report submitted on behalf of all the examiners.

Print Name _____ Signed _____
CHAIR OF EXAMINATION COMMITTEE

An Coláiste Ollscoile, Baile Átha Cliath

University College Dublin

THE DN/DM DEGREE

REPORT

(500 word typed report, please refer, if relevant, to any publications that have arisen from the work)

Please include brief commentary on the viva voce examination:

Print Name _____ Signed _____

(Examiner nominated to compile report)

Date _____

Appendix (x) – Thesis Corrections Sign Off Form

All forms and reports should be typed and are available to download from <https://intranet.ucd.ie/registry/assessment/acce.html>



THESIS CORRECTIONS SIGN OFF FORM

Candidate:

Student No:

Thesis Title:

Degree:

The above candidate has now completed all necessary corrections to his/her thesis and a hardbound copy of the thesis is to be submitted to Assessment, Tierney Building.

Print Name: _____

Signed: _____

(Examiner nominated to oversee corrections)

Date: