

THE DEGREE OF MASTER BY RESEARCH

Admission

1. To be eligible for consideration to undertake a programme of study for a Master's Degree by Research, a candidate must have obtained a standard of at least Second Class Honours in an approved primary degree or present other such evidence under the University's policy *Recognition of Prior Learning for Admission to Research Degrees*.
2. All applications for admission to a programme of study and research for the Degree of Master shall be considered and approved by the Head of School/Department/local Graduate Studies Committee in which the programme is to be pursued.
3. The period of study will be determined by the relevant School/Department in accordance with the provisions applicable to the particular programme. If the application is approved, the student will register for the Master's Degree for the duration prescribed, as a minimum.
4. In circumstances where applicants do not meet standard entry requirements, applications recommended for approval by the School/Department will be subject to final approval by the relevant College Graduate Studies Committee, and will be reported to the Academic Council Graduate Studies Committee.

General

1. A candidate who wishes to obtain a Master's Degree by Research must:
 - a. pursue a programme of supervised research for at least one year full-time from the date of first registration for the programme or two years full-time in the case of the MPhil and MEd Degree. Master's candidates undertake a student workload equivalent to 90 ECTS credits for each calendar year of full-time research, or proportional equivalent for part-time students. Students will complete minimum student workload equivalent to 90 credits (1 year full-time, or 2 years part-time) and a maximum workload equivalent to 180 credits, for consideration for the award of Master's.
 - b. submit a thesis upon the work done during such programme which will be assessed by Internal and External Examiners.
2. Students must register and pay fees each year until submission.
3. A number of generic and disciplinary training modules are available to Research Master's candidates to provide them with research and transferable skills. Details of these modules are described under the heading Modules for Postgraduate Training.
4. A candidate for a Master's Degree by research will normally submit his/her thesis during the final year of approved registration. Except where shorter periods are specified in the regulations for specific degrees, a candidate for a Master's Degree will be allowed a maximum of five years in the case of the College of Arts, Celtic Studies and Social Sciences, three years in the case of Engineering, or four years in all other cases, to submit their thesis. Candidates who do not submit their thesis within the prescribed number of years from the date of first registration for the programme for which they have been approved will require approval for extensions from College/Faculty. Permission to submit the thesis will be approved by the Supervisor and Head of Department/School.

5. In the case of the College of Arts, Celtic Studies and Social Sciences, the length of a Master's Degree thesis should normally be approximately 40,000 words.
6. Students registered for a Master's by Research programme will be required to undertake a progress review if they are registered for more than one calendar year. This will be overseen by the Graduate Studies Committee of the academic unit, centre or programme in which the student is registered, as described in the policy document: *The Roles of Graduate Studies Committees and the Operation of Progress Reviews for Research Students*.

Supervision

1. The Head of Department/School will nominate a member of staff to supervise the candidate's research, following consultation with the Departmental/School Graduate Studies Committee. The name of the Supervisor should be forwarded when the candidate's name is submitted to College/Faculty for approval.
2. In the case of an Interdisciplinary Programme, the Chair of the Board of Studies/Director of the Programme may assume the role of a Head of Department/School and the Board of Studies may assume the role of the Departmental/School Graduate Studies Committee, where appropriate and where approved by College/Faculty.
3. Joint supervision of a thesis is permitted. In the case of joint supervision, one of the Supervisors must be a permanent member of the University staff. Supervision by a suitably qualified, non-permanent supervisor is allowable, where the contract of employment covers the length of the Master's project and the Head of Department/School to whom the supervisor reports, or within which the student is registered, approves the Master's application (this covers research staff, temporary staff or academic staff who are due to retire during the registration of the student).
4. Unless permission is given to the candidate by the Supervisor(s) and Head of Department/School to work elsewhere under the general direction of the Supervisor, the research for the Degree will be carried out in the Department/School mainly responsible for the subject area concerned but, where the research is inter-disciplinary in nature, there will be due co-operation between the Department(s)/School(s) involved.
5. The Supervisor should assess the progress of the candidate and, if he/she arrives at the view that the candidate is unlikely to achieve the degree for which he/she is registered, this should be notified to the Head of Department/School who, following consultation with the Departmental/School Graduate Studies Committee, should communicate with the candidate without delay. A candidate's progress may be evaluated either routinely or on specific occasions, on the request of the student or supervisor, using the procedures described for PhD degrees here.

Examination

The regulations and procedures for the conduct of the Masters (Research) examination can be found in the Procedures for Submission and Examination of Research Masters Degrees in University College Cork here.