

Regulations for the Degree of Master of Philosophy

1 SCOPE OF THESE REGULATIONS

- 1.1 These regulations govern the awards of degrees of Master of Philosophy.
- 1.2 In these Regulations, unless explicitly stated otherwise, Head of School may be taken to refer also to the Chair of the NBI Graduate School Executive for candidates based in the Norwich Bioscience Institutes. The Head of School's nominee shall normally be the School Director of Postgraduate Research, and there may also be a nominated Institute Director of Postgraduate Research for candidates based in the John Innes Centre, Quadram Institute Bioscience, the Sainsbury Laboratory or the Earlham Institute.

2 GENERAL PRECONDITIONS TO AN AWARD

- 2.1 A candidate for the degree must be a graduate of this University or another approved university or possess some other qualifications approved by the University.
- 2.2 A candidate must, after consultation with a teacher in the University, submit to the appropriate Head of School (or nominee):
 - (1) the proposed field of advanced study and research;
 - (2) evidence of adequate training and ability to undertake the advanced study and research;
 - (3) the name of the teacher in the University who has been consulted.
- 2.3 Before being admitted to the degree of Master of Philosophy of the University a candidate must:
 - (1) Be approved by the appropriate Head of School (or nominee) as a candidate for the degree;
 - (2) Engage in advanced study under the direction of teachers in the University appointed by the Head of School (or nominee) as the candidate's supervisory team;
 - (3) Undertake research in a field of study approved by the Head of School (or nominee);
 - (4) Satisfactorily present the results of the research and study in a thesis and pass such oral and other examinations as may be prescribed by these Regulations.

3 DURATION OF COURSE

3.1 The period of advanced study and research shall, subject to the following exceptions, be two years:

- (1) The candidate may, with the permission of the appropriate Head of School (or nominee), spend not more than six months of the period of study at some other approved place of study or research. When the nature of the research requires that the work should be undertaken elsewhere than in the University the Head of School (or nominee) may appoint an additional supervisor.
- (2) In cases where the Head of School (or nominee) deems it appropriate, a candidate's period of study may be reduced by not more than six months. In such a case, the Head of School (or nominee) may also reduce the period within which the thesis is to be submitted, by not more than the reduction in the period of study.
- (3) Permission to extend the normal period of study by up to six months may be granted by the Head of School (or nominee) on the recommendation of the candidate's supervisor. In such a case, the Head of School (or nominee) may also extend the period within which the thesis is to be submitted, by not more than the extension in the period of study. The Academic Director of Research Degree Programmes may give special permission for further extensions to the period of study on the recommendation of the Head of School (or nominee) concerned.
- (4) the Head of School (or nominee) may permit the interruption of the period of study if there are special reasons for doing so. The Head of School (or nominee) shall specify the length of interruption which may not exceed twelve months. In such a case the Head of School (or nominee) may also extend the period within which the thesis is to be submitted by not more than the length of the interruption.

3.2 The period of study for part-time candidates shall normally be four years but this period may be reduced by not more than twelve months if the Head of School (or nominee) concerned is satisfied that an equivalent period has been spent under approved supervision on research relevant to the candidate's subject. In such a case, the Head of School (or nominee) may also reduce the period within which the thesis is to be submitted, by not more than the reduction in the period of study. The exceptions listed in 3.1 also apply.

4 PROGRESS AND PROBATION

4.1 There shall be an annual review of the progress of each candidate in each year of the candidate's period of study and/or registration

undertaken by the candidate and supervisory team and monitored by or on behalf of the Head of School or nominee. For students registering from 1 October 2015 onwards, during their first year of registration, the status of MPhil students as Master's candidates is probationary and their first annual review meeting includes a Probationary Review Meeting to review their status.

- 4.2 The Probationary Review Meeting requires the involvement of an Internal Assessor who is not a member of the candidate's supervisory team. As part of the Probationary Review Meeting, the Internal Assessor should agree a joint recommendation with the supervisory team on the candidate's probationary status.
- 4.3 If there is evidence at a Probationary Review Meeting that the candidate is not making satisfactory progress, or the Internal Assessor and the supervisory team do not agree in their recommendations, they will be warned promptly in a formal letter from the Head of School (or nominee) that they may be asked to withdraw from the University. The letter will include an agreed clear list of measurable goals to be achieved and the timescale for achieving these. The candidate will also be required to attend a Second Probationary Review Meeting at which the Internal Assessor and supervisory team should reconsider the candidate's progress and agree a joint recommendation as to whether the candidate should be confirmed as an MPhil candidate. Where there is evidence that a candidate is not making satisfactory progress at the time of a Second Probationary Review Meeting they will normally be required to withdraw from the programme.
- 4.4 If the Internal Assessor and the supervisory team do not agree in their recommendations following the Second Probationary Review Meeting and consensus cannot be established by the Head of School (or nominee), the Head of School (or nominee) shall consider the evidence provided through the probationary review process and form a view as to whether there is sufficient evidence on which to base a decision regarding the candidate's probationary status.

Where there is insufficient evidence or if for any other reason the Head of School (or nominee) needs a further opinion they shall recommend to the Academic Director of Research Degree Programmes the appointment of an additional Internal Assessor who shall review the available evidence, meeting with the candidate where necessary, in order to make a recommendation to the Head of School (or nominee).

The Head of School (or nominee) shall act at all times in accordance with Research Degree Policy Document 12 'Guidelines for Probationary Review'.

- 4.5 The supervisory team shall also report to the Head of School (or nominee) at any time when the candidate appears not to be making

satisfactory progress, is otherwise not fulfilling the conditions that have been laid down or appears unlikely to reach the standard of the degree.

- 4.6 A candidate who initially registered for the MPhil degree before 1 October 2015 may, with the approval of the Head of School (or nominee), be permitted to withdraw as a candidate for the degree and be approved as a candidate for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy no later than six months prior to the end of the period of study for the degree of Master of Philosophy. Sufficient evidence of progress must be provided. The period of study already completed shall count towards the period of study for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

5 SUBMISSION OF THE THESIS

- 5.1 In the thesis and examination, the candidate is required to show evidence of distinct ability to conduct original investigations, to test ideas whether the candidate's own or those of others and to understand the relationship of the theme of the investigations to a wider field of knowledge. The thesis should show evidence of adequate industry and application. The candidate is expected to take due account of previously published work on the subject, to show distinct ability in conducting original investigations and in testing ideas whether the candidate's own or those of others. The candidate is also expected to show understanding of the relationships of the special theme to a wider field of knowledge. The thesis should represent a significant contribution to knowledge. It shall not exceed 65,000 words in length. In making their judgement on the award of the degree, Examiners shall take into account that the substance and significance of the thesis should be of a kind which might be reasonably expected of a capable and diligent student after two years of full-time (or equivalent) study.
- 5.2 In the case of the Creative and Critical Writing programme in the School of Literature, Drama and Creative Writing, a substantial part of the candidate's thesis shall be an original literary text of high standard written specifically for the degree. In the remaining part of the thesis, which shall normally be between 15,000 and 30,000 words in length, and in the examination, the candidate shall produce a critical text of high academic standard – either literary-critical or interdisciplinary in nature and written in dialogue with the creative work – and shall defend the thesis as a coherent whole in the oral examination. Further detail is available in the School guidance document on the Creative and Critical Writing PhD programme.
- 5.3 In the case of the Literary Translation programme in the School of Literature, Drama and Creative Writing, part of a candidate's thesis may be a translation of high standard by the candidate, written specifically for the degree. In this case the remaining part of the thesis shall be a substantial critical essay. In the essay the candidate is required to demonstrate a critical understanding of the academic study

of translation, which is related to the submitted translation. The candidate must defend the thesis as a coherent whole in the oral examination. The proportion between the parts will normally be 60% for the translation and 40% for the critical essay. Further detail is available in the School guidance document on the Literary Translation PhD programme.

- 5.4 A candidate who wishes to submit a thesis must apply to the Head of the Postgraduate Research Service (or nominee). A thesis may be presented for examination at any time after the beginning of the last four months of the candidate's prescribed period of study provided that not more than three years for full-time candidates and five years for part-time candidates shall have elapsed from the date of approval as a candidate for the degree. The Faculty Associate Dean of Postgraduate Research may give special permission for extensions to the period within which the thesis must be presented on the recommendation of the Head of the School (or nominee) concerned.
- 5.5 A candidate for the degree shall, not later than three months before the submission of the thesis and in any case no later than three months before the end of the period of advanced study and research, submit for approval to the appropriate Head of School (or nominee) the precise title of the thesis to be examined.

6 APPOINTMENT OF EXAMINERS

- 6.1 The Head of School (or nominee) shall recommend for approval by the Faculty Associate Dean of Postgraduate Research, the names of two or more examiners, at least one of whom shall be an external examiner. This recommendation shall normally be made not later than three months before the expected date of the submission of the thesis.

7 EXAMINATION

- 7.1 A candidate shall be examined orally on the thesis and on subjects relevant to it. The examination shall normally be held within three months of the date of submission of the thesis. Exceptions to this shall require approval by the Academic Director of Research Degree Programmes.
- 7.2 Prior to the oral examination of the thesis the examiners shall each prepare independent preliminary reports regarding the candidate's performance.
- 7.3 In exceptional circumstances the Academic Director of Research Degree Programmes may, on sufficient grounds submitted by the candidate and/or their supervisory team, with the agreement of the examiners, and on the recommendation of the Head of School (or nominee), waive the requirement for the oral examination or agree to

its replacement by an alternative form of assessment.

7.4 The examiners having examined the candidate shall send their joint final report and recommendations to the Head of School concerned (or nominee). If the examiners do not agree in their recommendations or if for any other reason the Head of School (or nominee) needs a further opinion, the Head of School (or nominee) shall recommend to the Academic Director of Research Degree Programmes, the appointment of an additional external examiner who shall conduct a further examination of the candidate.

7.5 The Head of School (or nominee) having considered the final report and recommendation of all the examiners shall then proceed in one of the following ways:

(1) If the thesis and performance in the oral examination are of sufficient merit they shall recommend that the candidate be approved for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy;

(2) If the thesis and performance in the oral examination are of sufficient merit, but minor corrections are required, they shall recommend that the candidate be approved for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy, subject to completion of minor corrections within three months;

(3) If the thesis and performance in the oral examination are not of sufficient merit for the degree of Master of Philosophy they shall recommend:

either (a) that the candidate be permitted to submit a revised thesis. Such a candidate shall submit a revised thesis within one year and may be required to undergo further oral examination. A candidate shall not be allowed to submit a revised thesis on more than one occasion;

or (b) that no degree be awarded.

7.6 In all cases the recommendations of the Head of School (or nominee) shall be laid before the Head of Postgraduate Research Service (or nominee) who shall ensure that appropriate action is taken on behalf of the Senate.

8 FINAL SUBMISSION OF THESIS

8.1 A candidate shall submit two copies of the thesis in accordance with rules approved by the Senate.

8.2 If a candidate is approved for the award of the degree the Head of Postgraduate Research Service (or nominee) shall deposit one copy of the thesis in the University Library, where it shall be available for

consultation. The second copy shall be deposited with the School of Studies concerned. The Head of School (or nominee) at the request of the candidate, may determine that a particular thesis shall, for a period of up to three years specified by the Head of School (or nominee), be available only to those who have the candidate's written permission to consult it.

9 MODIFICATIONS FOR AFFILIATED INSTITUTES

- 9.1 Persons working within one of the following Institutes may be permitted to register as full-time candidates or part-time candidates for the degree of Master of Philosophy:

The British Trust for Ornithology
Broom's Barn Research Station
Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science
The Arable Group, Morley Business Centre
The National Institute of Agricultural Botany
Norfolk and Norwich University Hospitals Department of Family Medicine
Norfolk and Norwich University Hospitals Department of Medical Physics and Bioengineering
Norfolk and Norwich University Hospitals Institute for Medical Education
Norfolk and Norwich University Hospitals Microbiology Department
The Sainsbury Institute for the Study of Japanese Arts and Cultures

- 9.2 Candidates registering under this regulation shall proceed to the degree in accordance with Regulations 1 to 8 subject to the modification that each candidate shall have a supervisory team consisting of at least one member of the academic staff who shall be the primary supervisor and one senior member of the staff of the Institute concerned.

10 MODIFICATIONS FOR CATEGORY A CANDIDATES, INCLUDING STAFF CANDIDATES

- 10.1 Candidates for the degree of Master of Philosophy will be designated as Category A (including faculty of Schools and such other candidates as Senate shall determine) or Category B. Candidates in Category B shall proceed to the degree of Master of Philosophy in accordance with Regulations 1 to 8 above. Category A candidates shall be permitted to proceed to the degree of Master of Philosophy in accordance with Regulations 1 to 8 subject to the following modifications.

- 10.2 In the case of Category A candidates references to the Head of School (or nominee) in Regulations 2 (General Preconditions to an

Award), 3 (Duration of Course) and 7 (Examination) shall be interpreted as references to the Academic Director of Research Degree Programmes, or to their nominee if they have a conflict of interest. Thus the examination of any Category A candidate for the degree of Master of Philosophy shall be conducted exclusively by external examiners appointed by the Senate on the recommendation of the Academic Director of Research Degree Programmes.

- 10.3 In the case of Category A candidates, references to the Head of School in Regulation 4 (Progress and Probation) shall be interpreted as references to the Faculty Associate Dean of Postgraduate Research, or to their nominee if they have a conflict of interest.
- 10.4 In the case of Category A candidates, references to the Faculty Associate Dean of Postgraduate Research in Regulation 6 (Appointment of Examiners) shall be interpreted as references to the Academic Director of Research Degree Programmes, or to their nominee if they have a conflict of interest.
- 10.5 The Academic Director of Research Degree Programmes shall be advised of any application from any Category A candidate to continue the period of study as a candidate for the degree after ceasing to be a member of staff.