

Regulations for the Degrees of Masters by Research

1 SCOPE OF THESE REGULATIONS

1.1 These regulations govern the awards of degrees of Master of Arts by Research, Master of Laws by Research, and Master of Science by Research.

1.2 A candidate may register for a Masters by Research degree in one of the following Schools of Studies:

Master of Arts by Research

- (1) Art, Media and American Studies
- (2) Politics, Philosophy, Language and Communication Studies (excluding the discipline of Philosophy)
- (3) Literature, Drama and Creative Writing

Master of Science by Research

- (1) Health Sciences
- (2) Biological Sciences
- (3) Chemistry
- (4) Pharmacy
- (5) Computing Sciences
- (6) Environmental Sciences
- (7) Mathematics
- (8) Norwich Medical School

Master of Laws by Research

- (1) Law

1.3 In these Regulations, unless explicitly stated otherwise, Head of School may be taken to refer also to the Chair of 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 a Masters by Research degree must:

- (1) Be a graduate of this University or another approved university or possess some other qualifications approved by this University.
- (2) Submit evidence of adequate training and ability to undertake the proposed course of advanced study and research.
- (3) Be approved by the appropriate Head of School (or nominee) as a candidate for the degree.
- (4) Study in accordance with these Regulations.
- (5) Must, after consultation with a teacher in the University, submit to the appropriate Head of School (or nominee) details of the proposed field of advanced study and research.

2.2 Before being admitted to the Masters by Research degree a candidate must:

- (1) Undertake research in a field of study approved by the Head of School (or nominee) concerned.
- (2) Engage in advanced study under the direction of teachers in the University appointed by the appropriate Head of School (or nominee) as the candidate's supervisory team.
- (3) Satisfactorily present the results of such 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 programme of advanced study and research for full-time candidates shall, subject to the following exceptions, be twelve months:

(1) A candidate may with permission of the Head of School (or nominee) concerned spend no more than three 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) Permission to extend the normal period of study by up to three 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.

(3) 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 six 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 two years but this period may be reduced by not more than six 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 Masters by Research students as Master's candidates is probationary and the annual review meeting normally held in month 8 for full-time candidates (or month 20 for part-time candidates), 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, the candidate 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 a Master's by Research candidate. Where there is evidence that a candidate is not making satisfactory progress at 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.

5 SUBMISSION OF THE THESIS

- 5.1 In the thesis and examination the candidate is required to show evidence of ability to conduct original investigations, to test ideas whether the candidate's own or those of others and to obtain appropriate conclusions from the research. The thesis should be presented in a clear and systematic manner and should not exceed 40,000 words in length.

- 5.2 A candidate who wishes to submit a thesis must apply to the Head of Postgraduate Research Service (or nominee). A thesis may be presented for examination no earlier than three months before the end of the candidate's prescribed period of study provided that:

- (1) Not more than two years (three years for part-time candidates) shall have elapsed from the date of approval as a candidate for the degree;
- (2) For candidates registered in the Schools of Chemistry and of Pharmacy not more than two years for full-time candidates (two years for industry-based candidates and three years for other part-time candidates) shall have elapsed from the date of approval as a candidate for the degree.

- 5.3 The Academic Director of Research Degree Programmes may give special permission for extensions to the period within which the thesis must be presented on the recommendation of the Head of School (or nominee) concerned.

- 5.4 A candidate for the degree must, 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 candidate's period of advanced study and research, submit for approval to the Head of School (or nominee)

concerned the precise title of the thesis to be examined.

6 APPOINTMENT OF EXAMINERS

- 6.1 The Head of School (or nominee) concerned 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 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.
- 7.3 The examiners having examined the candidate shall send their reports and recommendations to the Head of School concerned or their nominee. If the examiners do not agree upon their recommendations 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 external examiner who shall conduct a further examination of the candidate.
- 7.4 The Head of School (or nominee) having considered the reports and recommendations 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 Masters by Research;
 - (2) If the thesis and performance in the oral examination are of sufficient merit, but that minor corrections are required, they shall recommend that the candidate be approved for the award of the degree of Masters by Research, 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 Masters by Research 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 shall be awarded.

7.5 In all cases the recommendations of the Head of School (or nominee) concerned 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 the 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 appropriate School. The Head of School (or nominee) concerned, at the request of the candidate, may determine that a particular thesis shall, for a period of up to three years specified by Head of School (or nominee), be available only to those who have written permission to consult it.

9 INDUSTRY-BASED CANDIDATES IN THE SCHOOLS OF CHEMISTRY AND PHARMACY

9.1 With the approval of the Head of School (or nominee) concerned, persons employed in industrial establishments may be permitted to proceed to the degree of Master of Science by Research by part-time study and research in accordance with Regulations 1 to 8 above, subject to the following modifications:

- (1) The period of study shall be eighteen months;
- (2) Candidates shall spend the first three months and the last three months in full-time study at the University;
- (3) Candidates shall spend the remainder of the period of study at the industrial location. During this period the candidate shall undertake part-time research under the supervision of a qualified scientist at the industrial location and shall consult their University supervisory team in Norwich every three months;
- (4) For each candidate the facilities for study and research at the industrial location shall be approved by the Head of School (or nominee).

10 MODIFICATIONS FOR CATEGORY A CANDIDATES, INCLUDING STAFF CANDIDATES

- 10.1 Candidates for the degree of Masters by Research 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 Masters by Research in accordance with Regulations 1 to 8 above. Category A candidates shall be permitted to proceed to the degree of Masters by Research 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 Masters by Research 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.