

REGULATION 38**MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY**

Current version with effect from: 13 May 2021

Approved by: Council

Approval History: 27 Jun 2012, 7 Oct 2015, 21 Sep 2016, 4 Dec 2019

**38.1 Admission and Enrolment**

- 38.1.1 A person may apply to the Academic Board to enrol as a candidate for the Master of Philosophy if he or she
- a) has completed the equivalent of at least four years of full-time tertiary study, including at least one year of study in divinity or its associated disciplines, at the University of Divinity or at a university or college recognised by the Academic Board, at a standard decided by the Academic Board; and
 - b) has demonstrated capacity to undertake research at masters level through completion of a piece of written work of at least 12,000 words assessed at or above a standard decided by the Academic Board.
- 38.1.2 Notwithstanding any other provision in this Regulation, the Academic Board may require an applicant to demonstrate fitness for admission by carrying out such work and sitting for such examinations or meeting such other standards as the Academic Board may decide.
- 38.1.3 An applicant who meets the requirements of the Academic Board may be admitted as a candidate for the Master of Philosophy in a College of the University. Upon admission the applicant becomes a member of the School of Graduate Research.
- 38.1.4 Every candidate for the Master of Philosophy must be enrolled during the period of candidature at a College of the University, and must comply with the requirements of that College and of the University.
- 38.1.5 Every candidate for the Master of Philosophy must have two Supervisors appointed in accordance with the schedule of the Academic Board.
- 38.1.6 The Academic Board may discontinue the candidature of any person whom it deems to have made unsatisfactory progress.

38.2 Course Structure

- 38.2.1 The standard full-time duration of the Master of Philosophy is eighteen months. The Master of Philosophy must be completed in not less than one year and not more than four years from the date on which the course is commenced, unless the Academic Board decides otherwise, provided that:
- a) a full-time candidate must complete the course of study within two years; and
 - b) any period of part-time enrolment is calculated as half of a full-time load, and the maximum length of candidature adjusted accordingly; and

- c) approved periods of leave of absence are not included in determining the length of candidature; and
- d) any period in which a thesis is under examination is not included in determining the length of candidature; and
- e) any candidate who does not complete the course of study within the maximum time and whose candidature lapses in good standing may be permitted to submit a thesis for examination within two years of the date on which candidature lapsed.

38.2.2 The Academic Board must establish course outcomes for the Master of Philosophy.

38.2.3 The course of study for the Master of Philosophy consists of preparation and examination of a thesis and completion of a program of research training decided by the Academic Board.

38.2.4 The thesis constitutes a distinct contribution to knowledge, demonstrated through a command of its subject and the presentation of original research and independent analysis. The thesis must be of not more than 40,000 words, inclusive of all elements except the bibliography, and must be presented in the manner decided by the Academic Board.

38.2.5 The Academic Board may permit candidates to present their research findings for examination in a format other than a written thesis but equivalent to it, provided that permission for an alternative form of presentation is sought and granted within six months from the date of admission.

38.2.6 Every candidate must apply for confirmation of candidature prior to completion of six months of full-time study or part-time equivalent from the date of admission. The Academic Board must decide requirements for confirmation of candidature. Failure to complete the requirements for confirmation of candidature satisfactorily within the prescribed time constitutes unsatisfactory progress.

38.3 Examination

38.3.1 The thesis must be examined by at least two persons external to the University with relevant expertise.

38.3.2 The Academic Board is responsible for the examination of the thesis and must decide examination procedures.

38.3.3 The examination of the thesis must lead to one of the following outcomes:

- a) that the candidate has completed the requirements for the degree of Master of Philosophy without amendment to the thesis;
- b) that the candidate has completed the requirements for the degree of Master of Philosophy conditional on amendments to the thesis being made;
- c) that the candidate has not completed the requirements for the degree of Master of Philosophy but may revise and resubmit the thesis for re-examination;
- d) that the candidate has not completed the requirements for the degree of Master of Philosophy and may not revise and resubmit the thesis for re-examination.

38.3.4 On successful completion of the examination, the candidate must lodge a copy or copies of the approved version of the thesis in the form and manner decided by the Academic Board.

38.4 Award

38.4.1 Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in this Regulation, a person may be deemed to have fulfilled the requirements of the Master of Philosophy if that person is a candidate for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy and the outcome of the examination of the doctoral thesis is that the candidate has not completed the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy but may be recommended for award of the degree of Master of Philosophy.

38.4.2 When a candidate has completed the requirements for the Master of Philosophy, the Academic Board may recommend that the award be made to the candidate. A candidate to whom such an award has been made is entitled to append the letters 'MPhil' as a suffix to his or her name.

SCHEDULE TO REGULATION 38

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY



Current version with effect from: 4 Jun 2022

Approved by: Academic Board

Approval History: 15 Jun 2012, 18 Sep 2015, 9 Sep 2016, 17 Feb 2017,
9 Nov 2018, 15 Nov 2019, 6 Nov 2020, 22 Apr 2022, 3 Jun
2022

38.1.1 Admission

1. The decision to admit a person to candidature for the Master of Philosophy is executed by the Dean of the School of Graduate Research on the recommendation of the School of Graduate Research Committee in accordance with this Schedule. An applicant may not be admitted without the approval of the School of Graduate Research Committee.
2. To be eligible for admission an applicant must satisfy the School of Graduate Research Committee that he or she has completed one of the following awards at the University of Divinity to the specified standard, or an equivalent award in divinity or its associated disciplines at another higher education provider recognised by the Academic Board to an equivalent standard:
 - a) a Masters by coursework with a 75% average; or
 - b) a Graduate Diploma with a 75% average; or
 - c) a four year undergraduate degree with Honours with a 75% average.
3. To be eligible for admission an applicant must also satisfy the School of Graduate Research Committee that he or she has completed a research essay or thesis of at least 12,000 words graded at or above 75%. The research essay or thesis may have been completed either within one of the awards listed above or as part of another program of study.
4. The School of Graduate Research Committee may require an applicant to obtain any other relevant disciplinary and methodological skills prior to giving further consideration to the application or as a condition to be fulfilled prior to admission.
5. An application for admission may not be approved unless a Research Coordinator satisfies the School of Graduate Research Committee that:
 - a) the research proposal submitted by the applicant is of an appropriate standard; and
 - b) appropriately qualified Supervisors are available and have consented to supervise the applicant; and
 - c) the applicant's proposed home College supports the application.

38.1.5 Supervision

1. The School of Graduate Research Committee must ensure that the supervision arrangements for each candidate meet the requirements of this Schedule and the Supervision Policy approved by the Academic Board.

2. A Supervisor may only be appointed or removed by the School of Graduate Research Committee.
3. To be eligible for appointment as a Principal Supervisor or as an Associate Supervisor supervising as the majority Supervisor of the higher degree by research thesis, a person must:
 - a) hold a doctoral qualification or, in exceptional circumstances, an equivalent qualification or level of experience to the satisfaction of the School of Graduate Research Committee; and
 - b) be research active in an area relevant to the candidate's project; and
 - c) consent to meet the requirements of this Schedule and of the Supervision Policy of the Academic Board
 - d) attend a research supervisors training or development seminar at least once every three years.
4. The School of Graduate Research Committee must appoint at least two Supervisors. At least one of the Supervisors must have previously supervised a candidate to successful completion of a masters award.
5. The School of Graduate Research Committee must appoint one of the Supervisors as the Principal Supervisor. The Principal Supervisor must be a member of academic staff of the University. The Principal Supervisor must ensure that:
 - a) the candidate is meeting regularly with one or more of the Supervisors through the duration of candidature; and
 - b) an annual report is submitted to the Dean of the School of Graduate Research in a timely manner; and
 - c) the candidate is meeting the requirements of the course of study, and that if there is any reason to believe this is not the case, that this is reported to the Research Coordinator of the candidate's home College.

38.2.2 Statement of Rationale and Course Outcomes

The Master of Philosophy is a higher degree by research in divinity or one or more of its associated disciplines and is designed for individuals who bring a foundation within this disciplinary range. The purpose of the Master of Philosophy is to qualify individuals to apply an advanced body of knowledge in divinity or one or more of its associated disciplines in a range of contexts and to provide a pathway for possible further learning.

Graduates of the Master of Philosophy:

1. have a body of knowledge in a field of study within divinity or one or more of its associated disciplines that includes the understanding of recent developments within this field
2. apply advanced knowledge and skills to plan and execute a substantial piece of research

3. have cognitive, technical and creative skills to generate and evaluate complex ideas and concepts in a field of study within divinity or one or more of its associated disciplines and to reflect critically on them
4. have cognitive skills in, and mastery of, research principles and methods applicable to the field in which the research has been carried out
5. have skills to present a coherent and sustained argument and to communicate research results to specialist and non-specialist audiences.

38.2.3 Course of Study

1. The course of study for the Master of Philosophy by major thesis consists of:
 - a) Submission of an annual report throughout the duration of candidature.
 - b) Satisfactory completion of confirmation of candidature.
 - c) Where relevant, satisfactory completion of requirements of the Human Research Ethics Committee.
 - d) Attendance and participation in a minimum of 8 hours of research seminars at the University and either a University Research Conference or a research conference approved by the candidate's College during each year of candidature. Satisfactory completion of these requirements must be certified by the College on the candidate's annual report.
 - e) Preparation of a thesis of up to 40,000 words for examination.

38.2.4 Thesis

1. The thesis must demonstrate expert knowledge of a substantial body of scholarship in divinity or one or more of its associated disciplines, and an ability to evaluate it critically and systematically.
2. The thesis must demonstrate expert specialised knowledge of appropriate methodologies and technical skills, including (where relevant) foreign and ancient languages.
3. The thesis must demonstrate the ability to plan and execute original research leading to new knowledge or to a reevaluation or modification of existing knowledge.
4. The thesis must be the original work of the candidate. A candidate must not present for examination any work or any part of a work previously submitted for an award of the University or of another tertiary institution, unless approval to do so is given by the School of Graduate Research Committee and the work so presented is clearly indicated in the thesis.
5. The thesis must be written in a scholarly style; provide comprehensive, consistently formatted references for all works cited; and include a full, precise and consistently styled bibliography.

38.2.5 Equivalent to thesis

1. Approved alternative forms of presentation of research findings are:

- a) Exegeted Research Project: A substantial project such as a musical composition, an artwork, field work, a translation, an edition, or scholarly tool such as a lexicon, accompanied by a written exegesis of at least 20,000 words that demonstrates how the project contributes to the production of new knowledge or to a reevaluation or modification of existing knowledge.
2. A candidate who wishes to present the research findings in an approved alternative form must obtain permission from the School of Graduate Research Committee prior to admission or within six months of the date of admission.

38.2.6 Confirmation of candidature

1. Confirmation of candidature is assessed by a Confirmation Panel comprised of three members:
 - a) the Dean of the School of Graduate Research or delegate as Panel Chair; and
 - b) two persons with relevant expertise appointed by the Dean of the School of Graduate Research.
2. A candidate applies for confirmation of candidature by submission to the Dean of the School of Graduate Research of the following materials:
 - a) a statement of the thesis or research project question; and
 - b) a thesis or research project proposal that identifies and explains the research methodologies involved in the project and includes a timeline for the project's progress and completion; and
 - c) an indicative bibliography; and
 - d) a sample of writing from the thesis or research project of up to 5,000 words in length, including notes.
3. The candidate attends a meeting of the Confirmation Panel and makes an oral presentation to the Panel. The candidate's Research Coordinator and Supervisors may attend the Panel meeting unless the candidate requests otherwise.
4. The Confirmation Panel may exclude the candidate, Research Coordinator, or Supervisors from the meeting for the purpose of confidential discussion during a Panel meeting.
5. The Confirmation Panel must make one of the following decisions and report that decision to the School of Graduate Research Committee in writing:
 - a) That the candidate is making satisfactory progress and candidature is confirmed; or
 - b) That the candidate be directed to revise and resubmit part or all of the application materials within six weeks of the date of the Confirmation Panel meeting, after which the Confirmation Panel may confirm candidature; or
 - c) That the candidate be directed to reapply for confirmation of candidature by a further Confirmation Panel no later than six months after the date of the meeting; or

- d) That the candidate is at risk of making unsatisfactory progress and that a Course Progress Panel be convened for the purpose of determining if candidature should be discontinued in accordance with the Course Progress Policy;

provided that the Confirmation Panel may only make a decision under c) if the candidate has not previously applied for confirmation of candidature.

6. If the Confirmation Panel's decision is b) or c) above, it must detail the measures which would lead to successful confirmation of candidature. These measures may include:
 - a) revision or resubmission of part or all of the application materials;
 - b) changes to supervision arrangements;
 - c) an intervention strategy in accordance with the Course Progress Policy.
7. If the candidate does not resubmit satisfactory materials or reapply for confirmation of candidature within the prescribed time frames, the Confirmation Panel may refer the candidate to a Course Progress Panel in accordance with the Course Progress Policy.

38.3.1 Board of Examiners

1. The Board of Examiners for each thesis is appointed by the School of Graduate Research Committee of the Academic Board and consists of a Chair of Examiners and no less than two Examiners.
2. The Chair of Examiners is a member of academic staff of the University. The Chair of Examiners is responsible for oversight of the examination, assessing the Examiners' reports, and making recommendations to the School of Graduate Research Committee in relation to the conduct and outcome of the examination.
3. The Examiners are persons external to the University with expertise directly relevant to the subject matter of the thesis and who, in the opinion of the School of Graduate Research Committee, do not have a conflict of interest or perceived conflict of interest in relation to the examination, the thesis, or the candidate. The role of each Examiner is to make an independent assessment of the thesis against the standards established by the University and to write a report detailing that assessment.
4. No person associated with the candidate either as a supervisor or as a subject of the research is to be appointed as an Examiner.
5. The supervisor may nominate Examiners in writing to the School of Graduate Research Committee.
6. A candidate or a supervisor may request in writing that a person not be appointed as an Examiner.
7. The School of Graduate Research Committee must appoint no less than two reserve Examiners authorised to act in the event that an Examiner is unavailable, or that the Chair of Examiners decides a third Examiner is required.
8. The identity of the Examiners must not be disclosed to the candidate until the outcome of the examination has been decided by the School of Graduate Research Committee.

9. No Examiner is permitted to communicate with the candidate or supervisor in relation to the examination during the examination process. If such communication occurs, the Chair of Examiners may remove the Examiner from the Board of Examiners and appoint a reserve Examiner as a member of the Board of Examiners.

38.3.2 Examination of thesis

1. The candidate and supervisor must notify the University of intention to submit in writing at least one calendar month prior to submission of a thesis.
2. A digital copy of the thesis must be submitted for examination.
3. A thesis may only proceed to examination if the Dean of the School of Graduate Research certifies that the candidate has met all other requirements of the course of study.
4. One copy of the thesis is provided in confidence to each Examiner. Each Examiner must provide the Chair of Examiners with a written report on the thesis within three calendar months of receipt of the thesis. The report must include recommendation of one of the outcomes in Regulation 38.3.3 and specify amendments or revisions (if any) to be made to the thesis. If the recommendation is that the candidate has completed the requirements of the degree conditional on amendments to the thesis being made, the Examiner must specify whether the amendments are to be made to the satisfaction of the Examiner or of the Chair of Examiners.
5. If an Examiner does not provide a written report and recommendation on the thesis within three calendar months of receipt of the thesis, the Chair of Examiners may remove the Examiner from the Board of Examiners and appoint a reserve Examiner as a member of the Board of Examiners.
6. The Chair of Examiners considers the written reports and recommendations of the Examiners and may proceed to report the outcome of the examination to the School of Graduate Research Committee. If the Chair of Examiners is unable to make a clear recommendation to the School of Graduate Research Committee, then in order to reach a recommendation the Chair may:
 - a) request the Examiners to consult with each other; or
 - b) appoint a reserve Examiner as a member of the Board of Examiners to conduct a further examination of the thesis.

38.3.3 Outcome of examination of the thesis

1. The Chair of Examiners makes a confidential written report on the examination to the School of Graduate Research Committee, the report to include recommendation of one of the outcomes in Regulation 38.3.3 and to specify any amendments or revisions to be made to the thesis.
2. The School of Graduate Research Committee considers the report and recommendation of the Chair of Examiners and decides the outcome of the examination in accordance with Regulation 38.3.3, provided that:

- a) any required amendments to the thesis are completed by the candidate within twelve months of receipt of written notification of the outcome of the examination;
 - b) any required amendments to the thesis are approved by the Chair of Examiners as having completed the requirements of the examination, after the Chair has sought advice (where applicable) from a Supervisor or one or more of the Examiners;
 - c) a thesis that is permitted to be resubmitted for re-examination is resubmitted within twelve months of receipt of written notification of the outcome of the examination;
 - d) no thesis is resubmitted more than once.
3. The School of Graduate Research Committee must inform the candidate and the supervisor in writing of the outcome of the examination. The School of Graduate Research Committee has discretion to decide the form of written report to be provided.
 4. The School of Graduate Research Committee must report the outcome of each examination to the Academic Board.
 5. A candidate may have recourse to the Appeals Policy to dispute the outcome of the examination if the candidate is able to provide evidence of clearly incorrect claims regarding the thesis that go beyond matters of opinion, or failure to comply with the examination procedures of this Regulation and Schedule.

38.3.4 Lodgment of thesis

1. The candidate must lodge a digital copy of the completed thesis with the University prior to presentation of the candidate for conferral of the degree.
2. Where a candidate is required by the University's Human Research Ethics Committee to lodge data collected during research, this data is to be lodged in digital form with the University prior to presentation of the candidate for conferral of the degree. This data must be retained in accordance with the University's records policy and any directions of the Human Research Ethics Committee. Unless clearance has been given in writing by the Human Research Ethics Committee, all other forms of the data must be destroyed.

38.5 Review of Decision of Confirmation Panel

1. A student enrolled in a higher degree by research may dispute the outcome of a Confirmation Panel by lodging a Review Request Form with the Dean of the School of Graduate Research within five working days of the student receiving written notice of the outcome of the panel.
2. The Dean must acknowledge receipt of the appeal in writing to the appellant within five working days.
3. The Dean must consult with the student's Supervisor or Supervisors and the Research Coordinator of the College through which the student is enrolled.
4. The Dean must report the outcome of the appeal in writing to the appellant, the appellant's principal Supervisor, and to the Research Coordinator of the College within ten working days of receipt of the appeal.

