

# Ordinances and Regulations: Degree of Master of Research (MRes)

November 2005, Teaching and Learning Support Office

\* PLEASE NOTE: These Regulations are for reference only, and were replaced by the [Postgraduate Taught Degree Regulations from 2012 onwards](#).

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**A. ORDINANCES**

1. The University may award the degree of Master of Research (MRes) in accordance with the regulations in recognition of the successful completion of an approved programme of training and research.
2. Students will satisfactorily pursue an approved programme of training and research which combines advanced study, research methodology and a substantial research project, or series of research projects, as either a full or part-time student.
3. These ordinances and regulations provide a general framework for the degree of Master of Research (MRes), and should be read in conjunction with detailed notes for guidance and programme specific regulations.
4. Regulations for student complaints and appeals are provided in the University's General Regulations, XVII and XIX respectively.

## **B. REGULATIONS**

### **1. Admission to the programme**

- a. Applicants for admission to the degree of Masters of Research will normally have:
  - i. a first degree (equivalent to a UK Honours Bachelors degree) or equivalent qualification from a recognised institution; or
  - ii. evidence of previous advanced study, research or professional experience, which the University accepts as qualifying the applicant for entry.
- b. All applicants must meet the minimum English language requirements of their chosen programme, as described by the University's Postgraduate Admissions Policy.

### **2. Duration of the Programme**

- a. A full-time Master of Research (MRes) degree will normally extend over a period of twelve months. The date for the end of the programme and submission of the dissertation will be published in the programme handbook.
- b. A part-time Master of Research (MRes) student will complete the programme over a more extended period of time which will be published in the programme handbook, but will not exceed five academic years.

### **3. Credits**

- a. A Master of Research (MRes) degree will consist of 180 graduate credits in total, comprising a combination of advanced course units approved by the University and a programme of research.

### **4. Progression and Assessment**

- a. Regulations for work and attendance are outlined in the University's General Regulations, XX.
- b. Students for the degree of Masters of Research will present themselves for assessment of their progress as required in the programme handbook.
- c. Assessment for the degree of Masters of Research normally comprises two components:
  - i. Course Units:  
comprising tutorial; seminar; and laboratory attendance with assessed reports.
  - ii. Research:  
at the end of the prescribed period of the degree programme candidates must present a dissertation embodying the results of a substantial

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research project or a series of projects carried out during the programme. Candidates must first have satisfied examiners in the assessment of the course units before they can progress to the dissertation.

- d. A student who fails to satisfy the Examiners in any assessment of course units may be permitted to resubmit the assessment on one further occasion as detailed in the programme handbook.
- e. The maximum mark to be awarded for resubmitted coursework will normally be 50% for the Master of Research (MRes) degree.
- f. Master of Research (MRes) degrees may have exit points for the award of a Postgraduate Certificate and a Postgraduate Diploma. These will be clearly defined in terms of level of achievement and will correspond to 60 and 120 credits respectively. Students who do not achieve the required pass mark in the taught element for a Master of Research (MRes) degree, but who do achieve the required pass mark for a Postgraduate Diploma or Certificate, may be awarded a Postgraduate Diploma or Certificate, as appropriate, provided they have successfully completed the requisite number of credits.
- g. Any student who submits a piece of assessed coursework (including the dissertation) after the submission deadline, without being granted an extension, will receive a mark of zero.
- h. Students may, in exceptional mitigating circumstances, and with prior permission of the Faculty, be allowed to re-take the entire programme subject to all outstanding fees being paid.
- i. The programme handbook will contain specific regulations on compensated passes for Master of Research (MRes), Postgraduate Diploma and Postgraduate Certificate programmes, if applicable.
- j. Programmes may employ stricter compensation rules, as approved by the Faculty, for example where professional bodies require it.
- k. The programme handbook will contain specific regulations on failing course units.

**5. Dissertation**

- a. Dissertations should be submitted in accordance with the information set out in the University's Guidance for the Presentation of Taught Masters Dissertations
- b. Dissertation or project submission dates will normally be 51 weeks after the start of the programme and will be published in programme handbooks. Submission dates for part-time students, where applicable, will reflect the length of the programme (pro-rata compared to a full-time programme).
- c. The dissertation will be submitted before the end of the programme in order for a student to be eligible for the award of distinction or merit. Students are either required to submit the dissertation by the end of the normal programme period, unless an extension for extenuating circumstances has been granted, or register for the Submission Pending period which means that the maximum period for an extension to submit a dissertation will normally be four months for a full-time programme and eight months for a part-time programme. Where

permitted, all students must register for the Submission Pending period and pay the relevant registration fee.

- d. At the recommendation of the Board of Examiners, students will normally be allowed one resubmission of a failed dissertation or project and this will normally be within four months of the date of the publication of the result. The Board of Examiners, in agreement with the External Examiner may, exceptionally, decide not to allow resubmission and the Faculty will agree that the grounds for not allowing a resubmission are justified.
- e. Students who achieve a dissertation mark of between 40-49% may accept the award of Postgraduate Diploma with no further work required or resubmit the dissertation on one occasion, at the discretion of the Examination Board. A student achieving a mark below 50% for a resubmitted dissertation will be awarded a Postgraduate Diploma.
- f. The maximum mark to be awarded for resubmitted dissertations or projects will normally be 50% for the Master of Research (MRes) degree and 40% for the Postgraduate Diploma.
- g. A student may be required to attend an examination, orally or otherwise, in the subject of their dissertation or project report, or a related matter as published in the programme handbook.

## **6. Extension of the Dissertation Submission Deadline**

- a. Extensions of the dissertation submission deadline may be granted in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the University to allow additional time for preparation of the dissertation.
- b. Candidates may exceptionally be granted an extension of their dissertation submission deadline of up to four months for full-time students and 8 months for part-time students beyond the completion date of their Master of Research (MRes) programme. A fee will be payable for any such extension that is granted by the University.
- c. Further periods of extension of the dissertation submission deadline may be sought only in exceptional circumstances. A fee will be payable for each period of extension that is granted by the University.
- d. Where permission for extension has not been granted by the University and a candidate submits their dissertation late, zero marks will be awarded.

## **7. Examination Board and External Examiners**

- a. There will normally be a minimum of two Examination Board meetings for each programme each year, one at which the marks for the course units are confirmed, and one where the marks for the dissertation/project are confirmed and the final awards recommended. Normally, all staff who have been involved in the assessment of the course units shall be present at the Examination Board meetings. The External Examiner will be present for at least one meeting per year and preferably at both, will confirm all the marks agreed at Examination Board meetings and be consulted when decisions on awards and classifications are made.

**8. Recommendation for Award**

**a. Pass Marks**

- i.** To obtain a pass for a Master of Research (MRes) programme will require the student to obtain both an average of 50% on the course unit element, and 50% on the project/dissertation element.
- ii.** To obtain a pass for a Postgraduate Diploma or Certificate will normally require the student to obtain an average of 40%. A pass mark of 50% may be required for some professionally accredited diploma programmes.
- iii.** The Faculty shall, on report from the Examiners, recommend to Senate the award of the degree of Master of Research (MRes) for those students who have completed all requirements of the regulations and satisfied the Examiners. The awarding certificate will include the title of the programme.

**b. Distinction**

- i.** A distinction may be awarded to a student who has consistently achieved excellence in the assessments of a Master of Research (MRes) programme.
- ii.** The student will have satisfied the following criteria in order to be awarded a distinction:
  - A.** An average at first assessment of 70% or more in the course unit component of the programme with no mark below 50% in any course unit.
  - B.** A mark of 70% or more for the dissertation.
  - C.** A Pass at first assessment in components of the programme where only a Pass/Fail is recorded.
  - D.** Submission of the dissertation by the end of the period of programme.

**c. Merit**

- i.** Merit may be awarded to a student who has consistently achieved good marks in the assessments of a Master of Research (MRes) programme.
- ii.** The student will have satisfied the following criteria in order to be awarded a merit:
  - A.** An average at first assessment of 60% or more in the course unit component of the programme with no mark below 50% in any course units.
  - B.** A mark of 60% or more on the dissertation.
  - C.** A Pass at first assessment in components of the programme where a Pass/Fail is recorded.

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| Document control box                              |   |
|---|---|
| Policy / Procedure title:                         | Ordinances and Regulations: Degree of Master of Research (MRes)                                 |
| Date approved:                                    | November 2005   |
| Approving body:                                   | Senate  |
| Implementation date:                              | November 2005   |
| Version:  | v1.1  |
| Supersedes:                                       |   |
| Previous review dates:                            |   |
| Next review date:                                 | tbc   |
| Equality impact outcome                           | tbc   |
| Related Statutes, Ordinances, General Regulations | Ordinances and Regulations: Degree of Master, Postgraduate Diploma and Postgraduate Certificate |
| Policy owner:                                     | Louise Walmsley, Head of Teaching and Learning Support Office                                   |
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