

# Policy on Theses in Graduate Taught Programmes



<b>Policy owner:</b>	Assessment, UCD Registry	<b>Approval date and body:</b>	ACCE 25 April 19
		<b>For approval:</b>	ACEC 21 May 19

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## 1. INTRODUCTION & CONTEXT

The purpose of this policy is to articulate the processes involved in the preparation, submission and examination of Minor Theses associated with taught Masters' programmes. For further information regarding Research Masters or MD or Doctoral Theses, see the *Policy on Theses in Graduate Research Programmes*.

The *Policy on Theses in Graduate Taught Programmes* :

- Outlines the parameters within which a Minor Thesis can be submitted for examination.
- Provides guidelines on the layout, form and presentation of Minor Theses.
- Offers guidance to academic staff on, and highlight the regulatory requirements associated with, the examination of Minor Theses.
- Ensures that the process of thesis submission and examination is conducted in a transparent, effective and timely manner.

## 2. PREPARATION OF THE MINOR THESIS

The student will prepare a thesis under the direction of a supervisor. The student must be a fully registered student and fees compliant at the time when the thesis is submitted for examination. The thesis can be submitted for examination in soft-bound or hard-bound format.

The following general guidelines apply, and these may be supplemented by School-specific guidelines:

### 2.1 Paper Quality and Typographical Detail

2.1.1 Method of Production: As these are examination copies of the thesis, they shall be printed on one side of paper.

2.1.2 Layout: Margins at the binding edge shall be not less than 30mm and other margins not less than 20mm. One-and-a-half spacing shall be used, except for indented quotations and footnotes, where single spacing may be used.

2.1.3 Font: The recommended font used shall be a sans serif font (including Arial, Helvetica, Tahoma or Trebuchet) and shall not be less than 11pt. Footnotes shall not be less than 9pt.

2.1.4 Length: Recommendations regarding the appropriate length of the thesis shall be provided by the relevant School.

2.1.5 Page Numbering: Pages shall be numbered consecutively throughout the substantive text of the thesis, including appendices. Prefacing pages shall also be numbered consecutively, but utilising the Roman numeral format (i., ii., iii., iv., v., etc.). Page numbers shall be right justified at the bottom of the page.

## **2.2 Preliminaries**

2.2.1 Title Page: The title should describe the content of the thesis accurately and concisely. The title page shall give the following information in the order listed (see Appendix 1):

- The full title of the thesis and subtitle, if any.
- The full name of the author (followed, if desired, by any qualifications).
- That "The thesis is submitted to University College Dublin in part fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of.....".
- The School(s) in which the research was conducted.
- Name of the supervisor of the research.
- The month and year of submission.

2.2.2 Table of Contents: The table of contents shall immediately follow the title page. It should list the title of each chapter and the main sections in each chapter together with the relevant starting page numbers.

2.2.3 Abstract: There shall be a summary abstract of the thesis (of approximately 300 words) immediately following the table of contents page(s).

2.2.4 Collaborations: Where the research activity for the thesis was undertaken jointly with others, the name of such collaborators or co-authors must be listed immediately following the summary abstract page, including a short description of the nature of the contribution made by each author, including the student.

## **3. SUBMISSION OF THE MINOR THESIS**

### **3.1 Minor Theses Submission Dates**

The Academic Council determines and publishes in advance the dates for each term of each academic session. These dates are relevant to the submission of Minor Theses on graduate taught programmes. Module or programme co-ordinators may, where appropriate, set deadlines for submission of Minor Theses prior to these dates. However, the final date that a student is entitled to submit a Minor Thesis is the last day of the examination period in the term for which they are registered. These dates are available online at <http://www.ucd.ie/students/keydates.htm>

### 3.2 Registration and Fees Compliance

It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that they are fully registered and fees compliant prior to submission of the Minor Thesis. Furthermore, a student will not be eligible to graduate until such time as their registration and fees status is in order.

### 3.3 Process for Submitting Minor Theses

Normally at least two copies of the Minor Thesis must be submitted by the student to the relevant School Office - students should check with their School Office to confirm the precise number of copies required. The School Office will distribute copies of the thesis to the examiner(s), normally also retaining one copy for School records. A School may also request submission of an electronic copy of the Minor Thesis.

The student must also submit two copies of the **Graduate Minor Thesis Submission Form** (Appendix 2), with one copy to be retained by the School and one copy returned to the student, signed and dated by the relevant administrator in the School Office to confirm that the thesis has been received. The student must complete this form to confirm that the research work is the student's own work, and that the student has not obtained a degree or other award in University College Dublin or elsewhere on the basis of the research presented in the thesis.

### 3.4 Storage of a Minor Thesis in a School

One copy of the Minor Thesis must be held by the School for a minimum of 13 months following the date of submission of the thesis. During this time, the School, with the consent of the student, shall determine if, and under what conditions, the thesis may be viewed by School staff, students and/or other interested individuals in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 1997.

## 4. EXAMINATION OF THE MINOR THESIS

### 4.1 Examination Role of the Module Coordinator

The Module Co-ordinator for the Minor Thesis module shall be responsible for oversight of the examination of Minor Theses. The Module Co-ordinator may, in some instances, also act as the approved examiner, and it is also considered good practice to have a second approved examiner for such theses for moderation purposes. The Module Co-ordinator is also responsible for submission of the grade(s) for the Minor Thesis module in accordance with the Policy on the Grade Approvals Process and the Academic Regulations on assessment and grading, section 4 available in the UCD Document Library at: <https://www.ucd.ie/governance/documentlibrary/>

When examining the Minor Thesis, the examiner(s) are encouraged to be cognizant of the learning outcomes associated with a taught Master's degree award (NQAI Level 9). Minor Theses are graded, and these grades are reviewed and ratified in accordance with the UCD grade approvals process.

<b>Title</b>	<b>Masters (MA, MBA, MBS, MSc, MSocSci etc)</b>
<b>Class of Award</b>	Major
<b>Level</b>	9 NQAI
<b>Volume</b>	Large

<b>Knowledge &amp; Understanding</b>	have demonstrated specialized, detailed or advanced theoretical and conceptual knowledge and understanding, which is based on consideration of current debate and controversy at the forefront of the field and that provides a basis or opportunity for originality in developing and/or applying ideas, often within a research context.
<b>Applying Knowledge &amp; Understanding</b>	can apply their knowledge, understanding, and problem-solving abilities in new or unfamiliar environments, within broader (or multidisciplinary) contexts, or to generate new knowledge through research.
<b>Making Judgements</b>	have the ability to integrate knowledge and handle complexity, and formulate judgments with incomplete or limited information, and to reflect on wider disciplinary, scientific, professional issues and social and ethical responsibilities linked to the application of their knowledge and judgments.
<b>Communications &amp; Working Skills</b>	can communicate their conclusions, and the knowledge and rationale underpinning these, to specialist and non-specialist audiences clearly and unambiguously.
<b>Learning Skills</b>	have the learning skills to allow them to continue to study in a manner that may be largely self-directed or autonomous.

## 4.2 Conflict of Interest

Staff are sometimes involved in teaching their children, partners, other family members or other friends and associates. These situations have the potential of creating problems in relation to examining. Staff should anticipate these potential problems and alert their Head of School to the situation. In order to avoid any perceptions of bias and to protect the member of staff (and the student) from any allegations of lack of objectivity, the Head of School should take appropriate steps to avert a situation where the member of staff would be required to examine the work of family, friends or associates by changing the School's teaching or supervisory arrangements or, where this is not feasible, by appointing an alternative internal examiner. The member of staff should not be involved in any discussion with examiners and should withdraw at the appropriate juncture from any School Examination Committee meeting, School Review, Governing Board meeting or Programme Examination Board meeting. All approved examiners in the School should be careful to exercise objectivity towards any student who is related to or associated with a colleague. Staff who have family members, friends or associates who are examination students in other Schools or Colleges should refrain from making enquiries about examination results from their academic colleagues.

**Appendix 1** - Sample Title Page  
**(Irish language version also required)**



***[insert Thesis title]***

***[insert name e.g. Joe Bloggs, BA]***

The thesis is submitted to University College Dublin in part fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of *[insert name of degree programme]*

School of *[insert name of School]*

Supervisor: *[insert Title and name of Minor Thesis Supervisor]*

*[insert date]*

**Appendix 2 - Graduate Minor Thesis Submission Form**  
All forms and reports should be typed and are available to download from  
[http://www.ucd.ie/registry/assessment/student\\_info/graduatestudents.html](http://www.ucd.ie/registry/assessment/student_info/graduatestudents.html)



## GRADUATE MINOR THESIS SUBMISSION FORM

*At least two copies of this form should be completed (typed) by the student and signed and submitted together with the requisite number of copies of the thesis to the relevant School Office - students should check with their School Office to confirm the precise number of copies required. One copy of this form is to be retained by the School and one copy returned to the student, signed and dated by the relevant administrator in the School Office to confirm that the thesis has been received.*

Student Name: Telephone No.:  
Student Number: Address:  
Programme: School:  
Module Code and Title:  
Supervisor:

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TITLE OF THESIS:

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**To be completed by the Student:**

I hereby certify that the submitted work is my own work, was completed while registered as a candidate for the degree stated above, and I have not obtained a degree elsewhere on the basis of the research presented in this submitted work. Where the submitted work is based on work done by myself jointly with others, I certify that a substantial part is my own original work, the extent of which is indicated in the collaborations page of the submitted work.

Student Name (printed):

Student Signature:

Date:

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**To be completed by the School Office:**

Number of copies received:

Received by (print name):

Date:

## Tracking Information

### Policy Working Group

Role	Name	e-mail	tel
Dean of Graduate Studies and Post-Doctoral Training and Chair of the ACCE	Prof. Michael Ryan	<a href="mailto:michael.p.ryan@ucd.ie">michael.p.ryan@ucd.ie</a>	4042
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Supervisor of Examinations and Dean of Academic Affairs (until August 2009)	Prof. Gerry Doyle	<a href="mailto:gerry.doyle@ucd.ie">gerry.doyle@ucd.ie</a>	1095
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Policy Officer	Mr Ciarán Ó hUltacháin	<a href="mailto:ciaran.ohultachain@ucd.ie">ciaran.ohultachain@ucd.ie</a>	1652

### Version History

Version	Date	Summary of Changes	Changed by
1.1	16 Jul 08	First draft	Ciarán Ó hUltacháin
1.2	11 Aug 08	Second draft with minor changes, following consultation with Michael Kennedy	Ciarán Ó hUltacháin
1.3	31 Oct 08	Additional minor changes	Michael Kennedy
1.4	02 Dec 08	Additional minor changes following meeting of Policy Working Group	Michael Kennedy
1.5 & 1.6	31 Mar 09	Additional changes following input from Graduate School Boards	Michael Kennedy
1.7 -1.9	15 Apr 09 - 18 Jun 09	Additional changes following meeting of Policy Working Group	Michael Kennedy
1.10 - 1.11	11 Sep 09 - 15 Oct 09	Additional changes following meeting of Registry Working Group	Michael Kennedy
1.12	20 Oct 09	Additional changes following meeting of Policy Working Group	Ciarán Ó hUltacháin
1.13	07 Dec 09	Additional changes following meeting of Registry Management Team	Ciarán Ó hUltacháin
1.14 & 1.15	21 Jan 10	Additional minor changes following consideration by ACCE and feedback received from Human Sciences	Michael Kennedy
1.16	04 Mar 10	Minor change regarding role of the Extern Examiner based on recent update to that policy.	Ciarán Ó hUltacháin
1.17	26 Mar 10	Minor changes following UGPB meeting of 25 March.	Michael Kennedy
1.18	28 Apr 10	Additional minor changes following AC meeting of 23 April.	Michael Kennedy
1.19	25 April 19	Amendment to reflect new policy on Subject Extern Examiners	Ciarán Ó hUltacháin

### Consultation and Approvals Plan

Committee/Group	Date		Version	Action	Decision
	Meeting	Circulation			
Graduate School Directors	08 Dec 08	03 Dec 08	1.4	Discussion	Approved
Policy Working Group members	misc	misc	1.3 & 1.6 - 1.8	Discussion	Approved
Academic Council Committee on Examinations (ACCE)	10 Dec 10	3 Dec 10	1.13	Discussion	Approved
Graduate School Directors		21 Jan 10	1.14		Approved
Academic Council Committee on Examinations (ACCE)	25 Apr 19		1.19	Discussion	Approved
Academic Council Executive Committee (ACEC)	24 May 19		1.19	Discussion	Approved