

Annex V: Guidelines for Master's, MPhil and PhD Research

	Masters with course work and a research component	Master of Philosophy (MPhil)	Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)
Qualification level	Considered as the intermediate level within the broad category Master's degrees (SLQF Level 10)	Considered as the highest level within the broad category Master's degrees (SLQF Level 11)	Considered as the highest degree of any form (SLQF Level 12)
Duration	At least 1 year of full-time research work, requiring face-to-face or distant supervision, out of a 2-year degree programme	2 to 3 years of full-time work, requiring face-to-face or distant supervision	3 to 4 years of full-time work, requiring face-to-face supervision
Type of research	Usually applied research that corresponds to at least 1500 notional learning hours (i.e. 15 credits). Replication studies are permissible.	Fundamental or applied research that requires a quantum of work clearly above a Master's degree at SLQF Level 10, but falls short of the requirements for the award of a PhD. Replication studies are allowed provided there is an element of originality at least in terms of candidate's study setting.	Original research that will in some way contribute to advance the current understanding within the field or subject. Replication studies are not allowed.
Supervisor requirements	At least one of the supervisors should possess an SLQF Level 10 Master's degree or above within a field of study, related to the Master's research.	At least one of the supervisors should possess an MPhil (SLQF Level 11) or above within a field of study, related to the MPhil research.	At least one of the supervisors should possess a PhD in a field directly related to the field of study. This supervisor should be the principal supervisors and all other supervisors can only be co-supervisors.
Progress paths	Completion of the degree will make the candidate eligible to follow a research degree at Level 11 in the same field of specialization.	Can be considered as the first step to attaining a PhD. If a PhD is awarded for an extension of an MPhil study, then the MPhil should be forfeited upon the award of the PhD; i.e. candidate cannot claim both the MPhil and the PhD, if the MPhil has been extended to a PhD. The suitability of extending an MPhil research to a PhD should be evaluated by a Research Degree Committee that constitute experts in the field, before the candidate is allowed to proceed to a PhD.	No further progress, as this is the highest level of award. However, a PhD thesis that falls short of the requirements could be awarded an MPhil, after proper assessment by an internal and external supervisor, both of whom are considered experts in the field possessing doctoral degrees.
Options for award/type of product to be considered for the award	By thesis of a suitable length no less than 15,000 words with sections/chapters that at least comprise introduction, literature	By thesis of a suitable length no less than 20,000 words with sections/chapters that at least comprise introduction, literature	By thesis - no less than 40,000 words with sections/chapters that at least comprise introduction, literature review, methodology, results and

	review, methodology, results, discussion and conclusion.	review, methodology, results, discussion and conclusion.	discussion. By publication – at least four publications within the same subject area in a top or middle level journals, as judged by an internationally accepted journal classification in the field of study; e.g. Scopus for science studies. The said four publications should constitute, when considered as a whole, work related to the same project or research study. One of these publications should be based on the literature review, and at least one on the results. By work leading to a new development – under exceptional circumstances, if a person has made an original discovery or developed an original product, such work could be awarded a PhD if this work could be documented and showcased to the satisfaction of a Higher Degrees Committee and an Examination Board that comprises a minimum of an internal and external examiner.
Assessment process	The thesis should be assessed independently by an internal and an external examiner. Both examiners should independently recommend the award of the degree. A defence of the thesis is not necessary.	The thesis should be assessed independently by an internal and an external examiner. Both examiners should independently recommend the award of the degree. A defence of the thesis is not a must.	The thesis should be assessed independently by an internal and an external examiner. A defence of the thesis during an oral (viva voce) examination with both the internal and external examiners, after both the examiners have assessed the thesis independently, is a must. Both examiners should independently recommend the award of the degree.
Examiner qualifications	All examiners should possess at least a Master's degree (SLQF Level 10) within the same or related field of study	All examiners should possess at least an MPhil degree (SLQF Level 11) within the same or related field of study	All examiners should possess at least a PhD degree (SLQF Level 12) within the same or related field of study

Note: If any of the stipulations are not met, then the supervisor/s should make a written justification to the Research Degree Committee and/or the Examination Board, explaining why the degree should be awarded at the relevant SLQF level.