

NOTES FOR THE GUIDANCE OF CHAIRPERSON OF EXAMINERS OF MASTER OF SCIENCE THESIS

STANDARD FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE

The degree of Master of Science (*MSc*) is awarded for an integrated program of structured learning and independent supervised study that produces a substantial piece of research in the form of a thesis for independent examination by at least two expert examiners, at least one of whom is external to the University and of international standing.

PURPOSE AND NATURE OF THE PROGRAM

The Master of Science is a two-year full-time program providing candidates with advanced cutting-edge theoretical knowledge in their chosen area of specialisation, together with the practical and research skills necessary for employment in the industry and/or research laboratories. Candidates can select from the following majors: Clinical and Molecular Microbiology, Food Security, Medicinal Chemistry, or Nanoscience and Photonics. The program consists of coursework, both theoretical and practical coursework, as well as a research component (dissertation).

The coursework will provide critical evaluation of research and presentation, develop the candidate's knowledge and understanding of statistical analyses techniques as applied to scientific research and develop an awareness of research proposal design and background. Candidates will have the opportunity to develop a research proposal including aims, methodology and a literature review.

The dissertation, no longer than 60,000 words, involves applied research on a specific project, a seminar and thesis describing the research in detail.

THE EXAMINATION BOARD

At least two expert examiners of international standing are appointed to assess the thesis. A member of staff of the University is appointed as Chairperson of Examiners, whose task is to consider the reports of the examiners and make a recommendation to the University on the outcome of the examination.

The thesis examination process is conducted online through the Examiner's Evaluation Workcentre located in the Griffith University home page: www.griffith.edu.au>Griffith Portal>Research>Academic Resources>Evaluation Workcentre:

- Examiners are asked to provide their recommendation on results of examination.
- Examiners are asked to provide a justification for their recommendation and a general evaluation of the thesis. Please note that in the case of competing recommendations, a recommendation may need to be set aside if not supported by a report detailing the justification for the recommendation.

Examiners must make an independent report and recommendation and are asked not to communicate directly with the candidate, the candidate's supervisor/s or each other.

Candidates are provided with copies of reports of the examiners and Chairperson of Examiners with their identity expunged. The identity of the examiners and Chairperson of Examiners will be revealed to the candidate when the examination is concluded. If this policy causes you concern, you are asked not to accept the task of examiner or Chairperson of Examiners.

THE EXAMINATION

In summary, the University's Higher Degree Research Policy enables an examiner to recommend that:

- The submission meets the requirements and the candidate should be awarded the degree;
- The degree should be awarded subject to approved revisions or amendments;
- The submission should be revised and resubmitted; or
- The submission does not meet the standard expected for the degree.

Where there is substantial disagreement between the examiners, the University may appoint a third examiner or an adjudicator examiner to consider and report on the thesis and on the reports of the examiners.

For the purposes of future scholarship application at Griffith University **ONLY**, examiners are also asked to recommend a percentage grade for the thesis:

7	(High Distinction)	=	80% - 100%
6	(Distinction)	=	70% - 79%
5	(Credit)	=	60% - 69%
4	(Pass)	=	50% - 59%
3	(Fail)	=	below 50%

Where there is substantial disagreement between the examiners, the University may appoint a third examiner or an adjudicator examiner to consider and report on the thesis and on the reports of the examiners.

ROLE OF CHAIRPERSON OF EXAMINERS

The Chairperson of Examiners task is to consider the reports of the examiners and make a recommendation to the Dean, Griffith Graduate Research School on the outcome of the examination. The Chairperson of Examiners does not undertake an independent examination of the thesis, although he/she may need to consult the thesis in order to make judgements about the comments of the examiners. The Chairperson's report to the Dean, Griffith Graduate Research School should include a number of sections:

1. **A brief summary/overview of the examination reports.**
2. **A collation of the examination reports.** The collation may be provided under the headings in the examiners summary form (ie significance of substantial contribution to the knowledge of the topic, standard of literacy presentation; methodology; survey of literature and documentation of statements; suitability for publication).
3. **Recommendation on the outcome of the examination**, including:
 - description of the extent and nature of any new work/revisions/corrections that **must** be completed in order for the degree to be awarded;
 - description of what new work/revisions/corrections are optional or desirable;
 - a recommendation on who should oversee and assess any new work/revisions/corrections. In most circumstances, it is expected that the Chairperson of Examiners will verify minor revisions and corrections; and
 - a timeframe for completion of any new work/revisions/corrections.

When the reports of the examiners cannot be sufficiently reconciled, a recommendation should be made on whether:

- a third examiner should be appointed;
- an adjudicator examiner should be appointed to consider and report on the thesis and on the reports of the examiners.

FURTHER INFORMATION

A copy of an example report or further advice on the role of the Chairperson of Examiners or the examination procedure may be obtained from:

Thesis Examinations Office
Griffith Graduate Research School
Griffith University
Bray Centre (N54) 0.21
Nathan QLD 4111
Australia

Email: thesisexams@griffith.edu.au
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