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UCD School of Nursing, Midwifery and Health Systems

College of Health and Agricultural Sciences

MSc Research Degree Programme Handbook



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¹ September 12th 2020. Information is subject to change and is informed by UCD Graduate Studies Information <https://www.ucd.ie/graduatestudies/researchstudenthub/researchprogrammes/keypointsonresearchprogrammes/researchmastersnutshell/>

This booklet is designed to assist you in understanding the policies and requirements that apply to MSc Research students in the UCD School of Nursing Midwifery and Health Systems. For further details on the regulations covering MSc Research Degrees in the University, please consult the relevant section 'Regulations Research Degrees' of the UCD Academic Regulations: <https://www.ucd.ie/governance/resources/policypage-academicregulations/>

Please note that university policies are updated regularly, including during an academic year, and links to policy documents given here are subject to change. To ensure that you have the most up-to-date version, please go to the web page of the UCD Academic Secretariat and follow the links to 'Academic Policies'.

Should you require clarification about these policies, please discuss with your Supervisors and other members of your Research Studies Panel.

Registration

As a registered graduate research student of the UCD School of Nursing, Midwifery and Health Systems, you will also be an automatic member of the College Graduate School.

Once accepted onto the programme, you must confirm your registration online. Once registered online, you can obtain a student card, which provides you with access to the wide range of facilities available to students at UCD. You are registered as a student when fees are paid. For queries about fees and registration, please contact the Research Degrees Administrator at researchdegrees.nmhs@ucd.ie

Plagiarism policy

Students are requested to complete a *Plagiarism Declaration Form* that applies to all drafts and final submissions of graduate work. You will receive this form from the Programme Administrator. For further information, please contact Research Degrees Administrator at researchdegrees.nmhs@ucd.ie

The School plagiarism policy can be located via the following link <https://www.nmhs.ucd.ie/current-students> and accessing the PDF in the blue tab 'Plagiarism Policy'.

The UCD plagiarism policy* is located via the following link <https://www.ucd.ie/graduatestudies/documentrepository/>

*please contact researchdegrees.nmhs@ucd.ie if you cannot locate a policy document.

UCD Graduate Studies has developed a new information hub for students. This is a useful source of information during the lifetime of your registration:

<https://www.ucd.ie/graduatestudies/researchstudenthub/researchprogrammes/keypointsonresearchprogrammes/>

The Graduate School webpage is a useful source of information:

UCD student intranet has resources for you: <https://intranet.ucd.ie/graduatestudies/index.html>

The School webpage is a useful source of information:

<https://www.nmhs.ucd.ie/current-students> Click on "Information for Research Degree students."

UCDconnect email address

All UCD communications are via your UCDconnect address. Please check when registering online.

Buddy system

We have commenced a pilot project allocating a buddy to a new student. If you would like to be paired with another student any time over your first year contact Research Degrees Administrator directly (researchdegrees.nmhs@ucd.ie).

Google Currents Community

We have a collective google community for all students registered to a research degree. Please use the following instructions to join the group:

Please use the link below to sign up using **a) your UCD account only b) Firefox browser only**

You will be asked to join and must set up an account --you can add a fake DOB as long as you ensure you are using a year that makes you aged over 18 years.

Specific instructions UCD IT services provided to enable students to connect to our google community:

Open a **Firefox browser**

- Click the menu at the top right of the screen (three bars in a square)
- choose options then Privacy and security then, Cookies and site data, and select clear data
- Then log in to your Email and click the link below to join the community

<https://plus.google.com/communities/100111541861905319284?sqinv=bolubVlyYldxYWRKa3d1alh2U2hkbUdRdGJJeEhB>

If you do not get access to the community can you go to the menu at the top right of your browser screen and choose a new private window.

Student Conduct and Code

Information and policies guiding student conduct are located here <https://www.ucd.ie/secca/studentconduct/>

The University is committed to quality in teaching, learning, scholarship and research, and it values honesty, integrity, dignity and respect. The UCD Student Code sets out the University's regulations and expectations in respect of student behaviour and conduct. The Code can be accessed here: https://www.ucd.ie/webteam/ucd_as/university_code.htm

Introduction

Welcome to the UCD School of Nursing, Midwifery and Health Systems MSc by research programme. As the largest and oldest university school of nursing and midwifery in Ireland, we have played a leading role in the development of nursing and midwifery education, practice and research nationally. The School's Research Unit is located within the Health Sciences Centre, a purpose-built education and research complex containing a range of state-of-the-art facilities, including lecture and seminar rooms, clinical laboratories, a library and information centre, and extensive computer facilities. All our research students have access to these facilities.

As a graduate student in the School, your work also forms an essential part of the School's research activities. The School's research programme provides the context for comprehensive research training for research masters and doctoral graduate research students, and it provides students with a basis for life-long engagement with research conduct and utilisation. These programmes aim to produce a cadre of clinical and academic researchers with the expertise to research topics relevant to health and social care, in the fields of nursing, midwifery, health systems, and related health and social services in Ireland and internationally.

Aims of the Research Masters degree programme

The primary purpose of masters-level research is to develop in the student the skills and competencies required to conduct research. The research degree programme may also include additional personal and professional development elements which develop the skills and competencies needed for successful research and support the acquisition of generic or transferable skills. This may be provided via specific modules from the advanced educational programme of the University. The primary purpose of masters-level research is to develop in the student the skills and competencies required to conduct effective research: it may include experiential research training and does not necessarily result in the creation of new knowledge.

Overview of the Research Masters programme

The period of registration for the research masters degree will normally be not less than three trimesters (1 calendar year) and not more than six trimesters (2 years) for a full-time student and not less than five trimesters (15 months*) and not more than 9 trimesters (3 years*) for a part-time student (UCD Academic Regulations 2020 Section 7.10 – for students registered from September 2019).

For each graduate research student, one academic Supervisor is appointed, and a Research Studies Panel (RSP) is created to support the student, monitor progress and to advise as appropriate. Research graduates are provided with opportunities to undertake training in advanced research methods; this training includes masters level modules in advanced research methods offered by the School and the provision of regular workshops in various methodologies. Also, students are encouraged to avail themselves of a range of modules across the University. Students must be available to attend the University for meetings, seminars, research training and RSPs as required. Regular attendance at School seminars and research events is expected as required unless an alternative arrangement has been approved, such as may arise in the case of overseas students.

If you enter the MSc Research programme from September 2019 onwards, you must satisfactorily complete research integrity training. UCD is strongly committed to the highest standards of integrity in all aspects of research. Reflecting this commitment, the University has developed a new policy on research integrity, along with a procedure for the investigation of misconduct in research. Please access information on this Policy and training using this link: <https://www.ucd.ie/graduatestudies/researchstudenthub/trainingdevelopment/researchintegritytraining/>

Please discuss with your Supervisor and RSP.

Research Masters Degree structure

The Research Masters degree will be awarded only where a student has completed a programme of study of Masters level (UCD Level 4) research activity (equivalent to 90 credits). The module descriptor for the award of Research Masters degree is presented below and outlined in the UCD 'Theses in Graduate Research' document located in the 'Policies and Guidelines' section of this webpage: <https://www.ucd.ie/graduatestudies/currentgradstudents/policiesregulations/>

Supervision

An academic Principal Supervisor is appointed for each graduate research student (may have additional co-supervisor assigned).

As a graduate research student, you will receive support, mentoring, guidance and advice throughout your programme of study from your Supervisor(s). The Principal Supervisor has primary responsibility for the academic supervision of the research degree student. Where appointed, the co-supervisor supports the Principal Supervisor in the academic supervision of the student (UCD Academic Regulations 2019 Section 7.13). A co-supervisor (if assigned) may engage jointly in all supervisory activities, including attending supervision meetings and providing progress reports and feedback on draft chapters.

It is the responsibility of the Supervisor to guide the candidate to conduct their research with integrity and per the regulations, policies and guidelines of the University and applicable legislation (UCD Academic Regulations 2019 Section 7.16).

Additionally, a Research Studies Panel (RSP) is appointed to monitor supervision and progress and to advise as appropriate.

Research Studies Panel

In addition to your Supervisor(s), a Research Studies Panel (RSP) will be established for you within the first trimester of your registration. The panel comprises of the Principal Supervisor/co-supervisor and at least two (but normally no more than four) advisers, one of whom must be a UCD faculty member. The RSP will appoint a chair independent of the Supervisor/co-supervisor. The purpose of the RSP is to provide advice, monitor the progress of the student, and support the Supervisor(s)-student relationship (UCD Academic Regulations 2020 Section 7.24).

Research Studies Panel members may include faculty, adjunct, visiting or research staff or relevant professional staff of the University or external to the University (UCD Academic Regulations 2020 Section 7.25).

The RSP will monitor progress against the prescribed programme of research and study and will meet at least twice in the first year and at least once a year after that (UCD Academic Regulations 2020 Section 7.36, 7.37). It is your responsibility as a student to be pro-active in engaging with the supervision process, including initiating a Research Studies Panel if you need additional support.

External Supervisor

Academic Regulations 2020 Section 7.19 state:

If a research student is based for longer than one trimester off-campus in an external organisation including research institutes, industry laboratory or studio, government agency or non-government organisation and an Approved Adjunct Supervisor is not in place, a member of staff of the external organisation must be appointed as an External Supervisor.

This must be discussed with your UCD Supervisor in advance of registration and a nomination form completed (see Academic Regulations Sections 7.20 to 7.23). Please contact researchdegrees.nmhs@ucd.ie

For further information, please refer to the *Policy Document Code of Practice for Supervisors and Doctoral Students* for details on the role of the Principal Supervisor and of additional supervisors (where assigned)

<https://www.ucd.ie/graduatestudies/documentrepository/>

Research Masters Degree Module Descriptor

Table B: UCD Research Masters Degree Award Descriptor

Title	Masters (MLitt, MPhil, MA, MSc, etc)
Class of Award	Major
Purpose	<p>The core of the Research Masters degree award is a coherent programme of supervised research which requires that the student successfully completes Masters-level research, the principal outcome of which is a submitted thesis in acceptable form and deemed to be of a satisfactory standard. The primary purpose of Masters level research is to develop in the student the skills and competencies required to conduct research.</p> <p>The Research Masters degree programme may also include additional personal and professional development elements which develop the skills and competencies required for successful research and/or support the acquisition of generic or transferable skills. This may be provided via specific modules from the advanced educational programme of the University.</p>
Level	9
Volume	Large
Knowledge & Understanding	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.
Applying Knowledge & Understanding	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.
Making Judgements	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.
Communications & Working Skills	Can communicate their conclusions, and the knowledge and rationale underpinning these, to specialist and non-specialist audiences clearly and unambiguously.
Learning Skills	Have the learning skills to allow them to continue to study in a manner that may be largely self-directed or autonomous.

Source: UCD Level Descriptors

Research and Professional Development Planning

Responsibilities of Research Degree Candidates (UCD Academic Regulations 2020 Section 7.4 and 7.50)

Candidates are required to pursue the programme of research, study and personal and professional development in collaboration with the Supervisor(s) and to work with their Supervisor(s) to meet the requirements articulated in the Research and Professional Development Plan (RPDP) and to

- a) fulfil all responsibilities that may be reasonably expected to progress and to conduct their research, training and development successfully.
- b) to ensure that all or any ethical requirements associated with their research are addressed at the appropriate time; and
- c) comply with best and ethical practice and the regulations, policies and guidelines of the University and applicable legislation in the conduct of their research

Research and Professional Development Plan (RPDP) is an integral part of your PhD programme. The purpose of such planning is to ensure that your work is focused on achieving your educational, professional and research goals. You will develop your RPDP with the support of your Supervisor and RSP. You must document your educational, training and personal and professional development needs, which, along with the proposed programme of research. This will play a significant part in informing the trajectory of your research and development as a researcher. Your RPDP will help you develop critical skills that will be invaluable for both your current research and your future career prospects.

Your RPDP will form the basis of discussions at your meetings with your Supervisor and your RSP. A student will tailor the RPDP to his/her own needs by utilising the aspects found to be most relevant. Before RSP meetings you will complete and submit an update of your RPDP to all members of your RSP. Following your RSP meetings, an electronic report is submitted by the Chair of the RSP to the Research Degrees Administrator.

Guidelines to assist you in producing your Research and Professional Development Plans are downloadable from <https://www.ucd.ie/graduatestudies/researchstudenthub/trainingdevelopment/>

<https://www.ucd.ie/graduatestudies/documentrepository/>

Coursework

You may undertake taught modules which will assist you in developing your knowledge and skills base. In consultation with your Supervisor, you will identify the modules most appropriate to your needs. You may select from the advanced modules offered by the School, including modules associated with the School's taught masters programme or modules provided by other schools within UCD. You are responsible for ensuring that you complete the requirements of the selected modules. Once registered to a module, you will be expected to attend planned lectures, seminars and tutorials associated with the module, and to undertake all assessment components to attain the credits for the module. In the event of your failure to complete a module, your RSP may require that the module be repeated, or an alternative module is undertaken. A module may be *audited* whereby you are required to attend the lectures, but there will be no assessment component or credits awarded on completion.

You may be eligible to attend a suite of UCD Transferable Skills workshops (if space available) that are provided for PhD students. Workshops on topics including Research and Professional Development planning, project management, time management, and presentation skills, are available, and UCD Graduate Studies coordinate these. You should discuss your requirements with your Supervisor and RSP members.

Transferable Skills are available from the Graduate Studies website <https://www.ucd.ie/graduatestudies/researchstudenthub/trainingdevelopment/>

Research Integrity Training and Module Registration (Academic Regulations 2020 7.28)

If you enter the MSc Research programme from September 2019 onwards, you must satisfactorily complete research integrity training. UCD is firmly committed to the highest standards of integrity in all aspects of research. Reflecting this commitment, the University has developed a new policy on research integrity, along with a procedure for the investigation of misconduct in research. Please access information on this Policy and training using this link: <https://www.ucd.ie/graduatestudies/researchstudenthub/trainingdevelopment/researchintegritytraining/> discuss with your Supervisor and RSP.

Module Registration

If you wish to register to a module, please contact the Programme Administrator researchdegrees.nmhs@ucd.ie.

If you withdraw from a module or decide to *audit* a module, you must inform the Programme Administrator **within six weeks of commencing the module**.

Research Seminar Participation

You are required to participate in the School's research seminar series. You will be required to attend planned seminars. In consultation with your Supervisor(s), you will be expected to present an aspect of your research or on seminal work in your field (details will be provided following your registration).

In addition to the School's seminar series, from time to time, you will be advised to attend other seminars which may be relevant to your topic and your research method.

Thesis Submission Process

The candidate must be a registered student of the University at the time when the thesis is submitted for examination. The Policy governs the thesis examination process *on Theses in Graduate Research Programmes* <https://www.ucd.ie/graduatestudies/researchstudenthub/researchprogrammes/researchexamination/vivavoceexamination/>

Please read the guidance on UCD eThesis System from May 2020. Using this system, you will be able to submit your thesis electronically, verify authorship and programme compliance, and track progress through all stages of the examination process.

MSc Research theses may be submitted at any time providing your registration is in order, and students should be aware of the deadline for submission within current registration:

<https://www.ucd.ie/students/fees/thesis/>

The thesis is examined by at least one external examiner and by one or two internal examiners appointed by the Research Degrees Committee in the School and approved by the UCD Graduate School Board and UCD Academic Council Examination Committee. Your Supervisor and School will organise the nomination and approval of your Examination Committee at least three to six months in advance of you submitting the thesis for examination.

A student may be required to defend his/her thesis through an oral examination. Should the Examination Committee recommend amendments to the thesis, the student will be required to submit the suggested amendments before the degree may be awarded.

Thesis presentation and submission

Ensure you adhere to all guidelines provided by Assessment 'Assessing Graduate Research Theses' and include a thesis submission

<https://www.ucd.ie/graduatestudies/researchstudenthub/researchprogrammes/researchexamination/vivavoceexamination/>

Also, the following School-specific requirements apply:

- The thesis should be presented in one volume

Viva Voce examination

A *viva voce* (oral examination) may be arranged. The *viva voce* provides you with an opportunity to defend your thesis, and it assists the examiners in deciding whether you have met the requirements for the degree.

Further details are available on the graduate webpage using the following link:

<https://www.ucd.ie/graduatestudies/researchstudenthub/researchprogrammes/researchexamination/vivavoceexamination/>

Appeals process

A student who wishes to appeal a decision of an examination committee may do so through the procedures for a formal assessment appeal determined in the UCD Policy on Assessment Appeals. Information relating to Appeals can be found at <http://www.ucd.ie/appeals>

Dissemination of graduate research

Research students are encouraged to publish from their thesis and present their research work at conferences and other appropriate sites for dissemination. Given the intellectual input of Supervisors in shaping the thesis, it is expected that Supervisors will be listed as authors on publications and presentations, with the research student (or graduate) as the first author. However, Supervisors may decline from being named. **Discussion between a graduate student and a Supervisor about a dissemination plan is encouraged as part of the supervision process.**

Contribution to the School

All research students may be required to contribute to tutorials/clinical skills teaching for undergraduate students; this is a useful experience and can be an addition to your CV. Students should ensure that they are prepared and familiar with materials if contributing to teaching and discuss with their Supervisor and Research Studies Panel members.

Information on all UCD facilities available are located on the UCD Graduate Studies webpage:

<https://www.ucd.ie/graduatestudies/researchstudenthub/researchprogrammes/>

University Facilities

Library

The modern and well-stocked central library is located within the building opposite the lake in Belfield. There are also other libraries, such as the health sciences library, Health Sciences Building located around the campus. The library catalogue can be searched online at <https://www.ucd.ie/library/>

Graduates will find the services and collections of UCD Library the perfect place to start their research and study. There is a deep research collection available in five different libraries as well as thousands of high impact journals to support all disciplines of the University. There are over 3,000 quiet study places in the library, individual study rooms which can be booked in advance by postgraduates, group study rooms and a dedicated Postgraduate Research Centre in the James Joyce Library.

UCD has a dedicated Special Collection Library and a Research Service unit which provides a research repository, digital library, bibliometric support, data management, mapping and more.

The library offers a range of classes including literature searching, using social media for research, mapping, managing your data, using metrics on your CV and using reference management software tools to help you manage your references. For more information, please view the library's schedule.

Computing Services

IT Services handle all computing procedures, including email accounts and the university network. Once registered, students will be supplied by computing services with an email username and password. **Any official UCD email sent to students will be addressed to their UCD Connect address.** It is the student's responsibility to ensure time-critical Email is accessed, read, and acted upon in a timely fashion. The official email address will be maintained in each student's record, from which distribution lists are compiled. Students can arrange to have their UCD Connect account redirected to another address or service provider, but students should note that it is the student's responsibility to ensure that this alternate mailbox is viable.

Your UCD Connect account gives you access to unlimited Email, and Google Drive combined storage, an integrated Google Calendar, Google+, eLearning resources, software and much more. If you have a smartphone, you can download the free app "UCD Mobile" with a campus map, library catalogue search, directory search, access to Blackboard mobile learn and UCD news. For an overview of the IT services available and solutions to common queries, visit: <https://www.ucd.ie/itservices/> or drop into one of two IT centres on campus.

You can also contact the IT Support Helpdesk, Email: ithelpdesk@ucd.ie, phone: +353 (0)1 716 2700.

For research related IT queries regarding hosting and other research specific requirements, please visit: <https://www.ucd.ie/itservices/ourservices/security/policiesandprocedures/>

The student email policy should be accessed here:

<https://www.ucd.ie/itservices/ourservices/security/policiesandprocedures/>

Requests for leave of absence and degree extension periods

For any requests, please contact the Administrator in the first instance to clarify procedures and submission of documentation: researchdegrees.nmhs@ucd.ie

There are University policies pertaining leave of absence and extensions are available on the graduate studies website and can be accessed here

<https://www.ucd.ie/graduatestudies/documentrepository/>

Requests must be made formally in writing to the Chairperson of the Research Degrees Committee and reviewed by the Research Degrees Committee in the School and then by the University governing board. The student is made aware of the outcome by the Research Degrees Administrator.

Student welfare

If students find themselves in any difficulties, be it personal, medical, or financial, help should be sought from the Supervisor or any other member of staff. The University also has a wide range of support services. Please see:

<https://www.ucd.ie/graduatestudies/researchstudenthub/servicesupportsforresearchstudents/>

Useful contacts

Administrator Research Degrees

Email: researchdegrees.nmhs@ucd.ie

Tel: 01 716 6409

Director of Graduate Research and Coordinator Graduate Research Seminars

Dr Kate Frazer

Email: Kathleen.frazer@ucd.ie

Tel: 01 716 6479

The School Webpage

<http://www.nmhs.ucd.ie/current-students>

The Graduate School Webpage

<https://www.ucd.ie/graduatestudies/researchstudenthub/researchprogrammes/>

Appendix 1

Related Approved Policies should be accessed from this link:

<https://www.ucd.ie/graduatestudies/documentrepository/>

The following policies should be accessed and are listed A to Z and by title:

Approved policies include the following:

- Academic Regulations
- Assessment Appeals Policy
- Code of Good Practice in Research
- Code of Practice for Supervisors and Doctoral Students
- Code of Practice for Conflict Resolution for Supervisors and Graduate Research Students
- Extenuating Circumstances
- Leave of Absence Policy
- Plagiarism Policy
- Policy for Split-Site PhD and other Graduate Research Degree Arrangements
- Stage 1 Transfer Assessment – 'Progression in Doctoral Programmes'
- Recognition prior learning
- Research Integrity Policy
- Student Code
- Student email
- Theses in Graduate Research Programmes Policy
- Withdrawal Procedure

Application for permission to continue in the programme (beyond the prescribed period of registration) must be made to the Research Degrees Committee in the first instance.