

RDP(TT18)24/
RDP(MT19)19/
RDP(TT24)06/
009-RDP-24/10/21-P

Education Committee

Originally approved at the Research Degrees Panel meeting in Michaelmas term 2019 and reconfirmed at the week 2 meeting in Michaelmas term 2024

Name of Regulation

General Regulations for the Degree of Master of Letters

Brief note about nature of change: Revised outcomes for MLitt examinations; update of reporting requirements; reorganisation of regulations to improve ease of reference with associated minor edits; removal of binary gender references

Location of change

In *Examination Regulations 2023* [2023-24, General Regulations for the Degree of Master of Letters \(ox.ac.uk\)](#)

Effective date

From Michaelmas term 2024 with substantive changes to examination outcomes for students submitting their thesis for the first time from Michaelmas term 2025

Detail of change

Throughout, completely new text is underlined and deleted text struck through.

1. On the current page for the General Regulations for the Degree of Master of Letters replace existing text with the following hyperlinked list

General Regulations for the Degree of Master of Letters: Part 1 Degree of Master of Letters

General Regulations for the Degree of Master of Letters: Part 2 Status

General Regulations for the Degree of Master of Letters: Part 3 Admission of Candidates

General Regulations for the Degree of Master of Letters: Part 4 Supervision of Students

General Regulations for the Degree of Master of Letters: Part 5 Residence and other Requirements

General Regulations for the Degree of Master of Letters: Part 6 Examination

General Regulations for the Degree of Master of Letters: Part 7 Supervision, extension and suspension following examination

2. Create new webpage. Plain text indicates existing text from the General Regulations for the Degree of Master of Letters, underlined/struck through text indicates amendments to text.

~~§1. Degree of Master of Letters~~

General Regulations for the Degree of Master of Letters: Part 1 Degree of Master of Letters

1. Any person who has been admitted to the status of Student for the Degree of Master of Letters and who has satisfied the conditions prescribed by ~~this decree~~ the General Regulations for the Degree of Master of Letters may supplicate for the Degree of Master of Letters.

2. The Education Committee shall have power to make and vary such regulations as may be necessary for carrying out the duties laid upon it and upon the Registrar by this section.

3. For the purposes of this section the words 'board', 'faculty board', 'board of the faculty', 'divisional board' shall include any body with powers to admit students to read for the Degree of Master of Letters.

4. A Student for the Degree of Master of Letters who is not a graduate of the University may wear the same gown as that worn by Students for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

3. Create new webpage. Plain text indicates existing text from the General Regulations for the Degree of Master of Letters, underlined/struck through text indicates amendments to text.

~~§2. Status of Student for the Degree of Master of Letters~~

General Regulations for the Degree of Master of Letters: Part 2 Status

1. The following may be admitted to the status of Student for the Degree of Master of Letters:

(i) a member of the University who, having held the status of Probationer Research Student under the provisions of the appropriate regulation has successfully completed the relevant qualifying test or tests and fulfilled the other requirements for transfer to M.Litt. status prescribed in §3 Part 3 of this section;

(ii) a member of the University who, having held the status of student for another higher degree within the University, has successfully completed the relevant qualifying test or tests and fulfilled the other requirements for transfer to M.Litt. status prescribed in §3 Part 3 of this section;

(iii) a member of the University who has successfully completed the examination for the Degree of Bachelor or Master of Philosophy or Master of Science by Coursework or of Bachelor of Civil Law and who has fulfilled the conditions laid down in §3 Part 3 of this section for applicants in that category.

2. It shall be the duty of the Registrar to keep a register of those admitted to the status of Student for the Degree of Master of Letters.

3. A board may grant a student suspension from the Register or deprive a student of their status; and in such cases it shall at all times follow the procedures determined by the Education Committee by regulation.

4. It shall be open to a candidate whose name has been removed from the Register of Students to apply to the Board for reinstatement as a Student for the Degree of Master of Letters. The application should have the support of their society and supervisor, and such reinstatement fee as may from time to time be prescribed by Council should be paid. Permission for reinstatement to the Register of Students may be granted by the Board provided that:

(i) no more than twenty-four months have passed since the student's name was removed from the Register; and

(ii) the number of terms the candidate spent with the status of Student for the Degree of Master of Letters did not exceed fifteen terms in the case of a full-time student, or eighteen terms in the case of a part-time student. (This limit includes any time spent with the status of Probationer Research Student or other relevant status before admission to the status of Student for the Degree of Master of Letters.)

5. Exceptionally, a candidate who is not able to apply for reinstatement within the provisions above may make an application to Council's Education Committee for reinstatement to the Register of Students. Such candidates must meet the requirements for reinstatement by the Board and in addition must provide a statement explaining why it is reasonable for Education Committee to permit their reinstatement and outlining the circumstances that have prevented earlier submission. For such applications, Education Committee will consider the length of time since the candidate's name was on the Register of Students, the seriousness of the causes for the delay, and the views of the candidate's department/faculty, supervisor and college.

4. Create new webpage. Plain text indicates existing text from the General Regulations for the Degree of Master of Letters, underlined/struck through text indicates amendments to text.

~~§3. Admission of Candidates to the Status of Student for the Degree of Master of Letters~~

General Regulations for the Degree of Master of Letters: Part 3 Admission of Candidates

1. Candidates qualified under ~~§2 Part 2~~ of this section may apply for admission as a Student for the Degree of Master of Letters to the board concerned through the Registrar. Such applications shall be accompanied by:

(i) a statement from the supervisor that ~~he or she approves~~ they approve the proposed subject for a thesis and considers the candidate well qualified to undertake research in that subject;

(ii) a statement of support for the application from the candidate's college;

(iii) a statement of the subject of the thesis and of the manner in which the candidate proposes to treat it.

2. Candidates qualified under ~~§2 Part 2~~, cl. 1 (i) and (ii) of this section shall in addition be required to submit written work, the precise manner and form of which shall be determined by regulation by each board. This shall be considered by two assessors appointed by the board, neither of whom shall normally be the candidate's supervisor, and who shall examine the candidate orally. Upon completion of their examination of the candidate's application, the assessors shall make a recommendation as to whether it should be granted. In each case the assessors shall make a reasoned written report to the board in support of their recommendation.

3. The board shall consider the candidate's application together with the material supplied in accordance with clauses 1 and 2 above. No application shall be granted unless the board is satisfied that the candidate is capable of carrying out research, that the subject of the thesis and the manner of its treatment proposed by the candidate are acceptable, that the subject is one which may profitably be pursued under the superintendence of the board, and that the board or department concerned is satisfied that it has adequate facilities to enable the research to be undertaken.

4. Subject to the approval of the Education Committee, each board may determine by regulation what other test or condition, if any, it requires before admitting a candidate to M.Litt. status. Each board shall be empowered, without further authority, to require from the supervisor any further confidential report on an applicant's suitability to pursue research towards the Degree of Master of Letters.

5. It shall be the duty of the Registrar to submit any application made under these provisions to the board concerned, and to notify the candidate of the outcome as soon as may be.

6. A student qualified under ~~§2 Part 2~~, cl. 1 (i) or (ii) of this section whose application for transfer to M.Litt. status is successful shall be reckoned as having been admitted to the status of student for the Degree of Master of Letters with effect from the date of admission to his or her their previous status, unless the board determines otherwise.

7. A student qualified under ~~§2~~ Part 2, cl. 1 (iii) of this section whose application for admission to M.Litt. status is successful shall be admitted as a Student for the Degree of Master of Letters from the beginning of the term in which admission takes place.

8. The oral examination required under cl.2 of this section shall be held in Oxford in a suitable university or college building, unless in exceptional circumstances the board concerned gives special permission for it to be held at some other place. Such permission shall only be granted where the candidate and both the assessors have agreed in writing to the proposed arrangements.

9. In exceptional circumstances, application may be made to the relevant board for special permission to hold the oral examination required under cl.2 of this section using audiovisual electronic communication. Special permission may be granted for any or all of the candidate and assessors to take part in the oral examination using audiovisual electronic communication. The board concerned may approve the application where:

(i) it accepts that no alternative and timely arrangements may reasonably be put in place;

(ii) the proposed arrangements are acceptable to both the assessors and to the candidate, all of whom have agreed to them in writing;

(iii) it is content to bear the additional cost of the necessary arrangements;

(iv) the oral examination takes place according to the protocol approved by the Education Committee;

(v) in the event of any technical or other problems, the validity of the process used to conduct the oral examination and to determine the outcome will be decided by the Proctors.

5. Create new webpage. Plain text indicates existing text from the General Regulations for the Degree of Master of Letters, underlined/struck through text indicates amendments to text.

~~§4. Supervision of Students for the Degree of Master of Letters~~

General Regulations for the Degree of Master of Letters: Part 4 Supervision of Students

1. Every candidate on admission as a Student for the Degree of Master of Letters shall be placed by the board concerned under the supervision of a member of the University or other competent person selected by the board, and the board shall have power for sufficient reason to change the supervisor of any student or to arrange for joint supervision by more than one supervisor, if it deems it necessary.

2. It shall be the duty of a supervisor to direct and superintend the work of the student, to meet the student regularly, and to undertake such duties as shall from time to time be set out in the relevant Policy and Guidance issued by the Education Committee.

3. The supervisor shall submit a report on the progress of the student to the board ~~three~~ four times a year, and at any other time when the board so requests or ~~he or she~~ they ~~deems~~ deems it expedient. The supervisor shall communicate the contents of the report

to the student on each occasion that a report is made, so that the student is aware of the supervisor's assessment of ~~his or her~~ their work during the period in question. In addition, the supervisor shall inform the board at once if ~~he or she is~~ they are of the opinion that the student is unlikely to reach the standard required for the Degree of Master of Letters.

The Registrar shall send a copy of each report by the supervisor to the student's college, and to the Director or other nominated person under the faculty board concerned.

4. It shall be the duty of every Student for the Degree of Master of Letters to undertake such guided work as ~~his or her~~ their supervisor requests; to attend such meetings with ~~his or her~~ their supervisor as the latter reasonably arranges; and to fulfil any other requirements of the General Board set out from time to time in the relevant Policy and Guidance issued by the Education Committee.

6. Create new webpage. Plain text indicates existing text from the General Regulations for the Degree of Master of Letters, underlined/struck through text indicates amendments to text.

~~§5. Residence and other Requirements for Students for the Degree of Master of Letters~~

General Regulations for the Degree of Master of Letters: Part 5 Residence and other Requirements

1. Except as provided in clause 3 of this ~~sub-section~~ Part, a Student for the Degree of Master of Letters who has been admitted for full-time study under the provisions of ~~§3 Part 3~~ Part 3 of this section shall be required to be on the Register for at least six terms, and during this period shall keep statutory residence and pursue ~~his or her~~ their course of study at Oxford. Time spent outside Oxford during term as part of an academic programme approved by Council shall count towards residence for the purpose of this clause.

2. The board concerned may dispense a student on application through ~~his or her~~ their college and with the support of the supervisor from not more than three terms of such residence and study in Oxford, provided that such dispensation shall be granted only on grounds that it is necessary to the student's work that ~~he or she~~ they should be allowed to study at some other place than Oxford.

3. A student who has successfully completed the examination for the Degree of Master or Bachelor of Philosophy or of Master of Studies or of Master of Science by Coursework, or a student under the supervision of the Board of the Faculty of Law admitted under the provisions of ~~§2 Part 2~~, cl. 1 (iii) of this section, shall keep statutory residence and pursue ~~his or her~~ their course of study at Oxford for not less than three terms after such admission.

4. Any student who, after admission under ~~§3 Part 3~~ Part 3 of this section, has kept statutory residence and studied at Oxford for a period of forty-two days, not necessarily consecutive, but falling within the same academic year, may apply to the board concerned for leave to reckon such period as one term towards the total required under clause 1 of this ~~sub-section~~ Part. The board shall have power to grant such leave provided that:

- (i) no day so reckoned which falls within any term shall also be reckoned for the purpose of keeping that term;
- (ii) no student who has kept the Michaelmas, or the Hilary, or the Trinity Term shall be allowed to reckon in this manner any day that falls within the eight weeks beginning on the first day of Full Term in Michaelmas, or Hilary, or Trinity Term, as the case may be;
- (iii) no student shall be allowed to reckon in this manner more than one such period in the same academic year;
- (iv) no student shall be allowed to reckon more than three terms in the same academic year.

For the purposes of this clause, the academic year shall begin on the first day of Michaelmas Term and end on the day preceding the first day of Michaelmas Term in the following calendar year.

Applications for leave to reckon any period as a term under the provisions of this clause shall be made to the board, through the Registrar, by the student's college.

5. Part-time students holding the status of student for the Degree of Master of Letters shall in each case be required to pursue their course of study for a minimum of twelve terms, subject to the provisions of ~~§3~~ Part 3, cl. 6. Part-time students shall not be required to keep statutory residence, but must attend for such instruction as the board or other relevant body shall require, subject to the approval of the Education Committee. No student may apply to the relevant faculty board or other body for the appointment of examiners unless ~~his or her~~ their supervisor has certified that the student has fulfilled the requirements for part-time students laid down by the board or other relevant body.

6. For a student who changes from full-time to part-time study or vice-versa, the period of study will be calculated on the basis that each term of full-time study counts as 1 FTE, and each term of part-time study counts as 0.5 FTE, and the student must pursue ~~his or her~~ their course of study for a minimum equivalent to six FTE terms.

7. Any student may, with the permission of the board, alter the subject of research approved by the board, provided that the conditions of suitability set out in ~~§2~~ Part 2 above continue to be met. In such cases the date of the student's admission for all the purposes of this section shall remain unchanged, unless the board shall determine otherwise.

8. If a full-time Student for the Degree of Master of Letters has held that status for nine terms, or a part-time student for fifteen terms, but has been prevented by exceptional circumstances from completing ~~his or her~~ their thesis, the board shall have power to grant an extension of time for a period or periods not exceeding three terms in all for a full-time student, or three terms in all for a part-time student, to be determined by the board. Applications for such extension of time shall be made through the Registrar not later than the term in which the student is due to apply for permission to supplicate, and must be accompanied by statements of support from the student's society and supervisor.

9. A Student for the Degree of Master of Letters shall cease to hold such status if:

- (i) ~~he or she~~ they shall have been refused permission to supplicate for the Degree of Master of Letters;

(ii) the board concerned shall in accordance with ~~§2~~ Part 2 cl. 3 of this section, and with the provisions set down by regulation by the Education Committee, and after consultation with the student's college and supervisor, have deprived the student of such status;

(iii) ~~he or she~~ they shall have been transferred under the relevant provisions to another status;

(iv) ~~he or she~~ they shall have failed to complete ~~his or her~~ their thesis within nine terms for a full-time student, or fifteen terms for a part-time student or within such further extension of time as may have been granted by the board concerned.

7. Create new webpage. Plain text indicates existing text from the General Regulations for the Degree of Master of Letters, underlined/struck through text indicates amendments to text.

§6. Examination of Students for the Degree of Master of Letters **General Regulations for the Degree of Master of Letters: Part 6 Examination**

1. A Student for the Degree of Master of Letters who has fulfilled the applicable residence and other requirements set out in ~~§5~~ Part 5, and whose status has not expired, may apply for the appointment of examiners and for leave to supplicate for the Degree of Master of Letters.

2. Such applications should be made to the board concerned through the Registrar. They shall include:

(i) a certificate from the supervisor that the candidate has pursued their course of study in Oxford in accordance with the provisions of ~~§5 of this section~~ Part 5;

(ii) a statement by the candidate of what part, if any, of the thesis has already been accepted, or is being concurrently submitted, for any degree or diploma or certificate or other qualification in this University or elsewhere;

(iii) a statement by the candidate that the thesis is their own work, except where otherwise indicated.

3. The supervisor shall consult with the candidate concerning possible examiners, and forward to the board the names of suggested examiners with details of any special considerations which the candidate wishes to make known about any potential examiners.

4. The student shall also submit for examination, at such time as the Education Committee shall by regulation require:

~~[For all students submitting their thesis for the first time before MT 2019: (i) two printed or typewritten copies of a thesis;~~

~~(ii) two printed or typewritten copies of an abstract of the thesis, which shall not normally exceed 300 words.]~~

~~[For all students submitting their thesis for the first time from MT 2019:~~ (i) a digital pdf copy of their thesis via the Research Thesis Digital Submissions (RTDS) application.

(ii) an abstract of the thesis which should concisely summarise its scope and principal arguments, in about 300 words. The abstract should be placed within the thesis, generally immediately following the Table of Contents.†

5. On receipt of an application for the appointment of examiners the board concerned shall appoint two examiners, neither of whom shall be the candidate's supervisor, and whose duties shall be:

(i) to consider the thesis and the abstract of it submitted by the student under the provisions of the preceding clause, provided that they shall exclude from consideration in making their report any part of the thesis which has already been accepted, or is being concurrently submitted, for any degree or other qualification in this University or elsewhere (except for the Degree of Bachelor of Civil Law of this University) and shall have the power to require the candidate to produce for their inspection the complete thesis so accepted or concurrently submitted;

(ii) to examine the student orally, and also, if they think fit, by a written examination, in the subject of the thesis and in other relevant subjects;

(iii) to report to the board through the Registrar;

~~[For all students submitting their thesis for the first time before MT 2019:~~ (iv) to return to the student the copies of the thesis and of the abstract thereof submitted for examination.†

~~[For all students submitting their thesis for the first time from MT 2019:~~ (iv) to delete all digital copies of the thesis and return to the student any soft-bound copies of the thesis received from Student Registry.†

The Education Committee shall have power to make regulations concerning the notice to be given of the oral examination and of the time and place at which it may be held.

[For students submitting their thesis for the first time on or after Sunday of Week 1 of MT 2025:

6. In granting leave to supplicate for the Degree of Master of Letters, the examiners must be satisfied, and include statements in their report that:

(i) the student possesses a good general knowledge of the particular field of learning within which the subject of the thesis falls;

(ii) that the candidate has shown competence in investigating the chosen topic;

(iii) the student has made a worthwhile contribution in the particular field of learning within which the subject of the thesis falls;

(iv) the thesis is presented in a lucid and scholarly manner;

(v) in their opinion the thesis merits the Degree of Master of Letters;

(vi) the student has presented a satisfactory abstract of the thesis.

Examiners shall bear in mind that their judgement of the extent of the candidate's contribution to knowledge or understanding of the relevant field of learning shall take into account what may reasonably be expected of a capable and diligent student after two years of full-time study in the case of a full-time student, or twelve terms in the case of a part-time student.

7. The following are the permissible outcomes that the examiners may recommend having completed the examination. Certain outcomes are only permissible after a specified examination attempt. The examiners may recommend:

Outcome A. That the candidate be given leave to supplicate for the degree of Master of Letters without any further amendments to the thesis;

Outcome B. That the candidate be given leave to supplicate for the degree of Master of Letters following minor corrections of the thesis;

Outcome C: That the candidate should make major corrections to the thesis;

Outcome D: That the candidate should make major corrections of the thesis, followed by a mandatory viva;

Outcome E: Reference back of the thesis for further work followed by re-examination for the degree of Master of Letters;

Outcome F: That the candidate's application for leave to supplicate should be refused (fail).

8. Having completed the examination of a candidate for the first time, the examiners may recommend any one of the Outcomes A-E given in clause 7 above and described in detail in clause 9.

Having completed the examination of a candidate for a second time, the examiners may recommend any one of the Outcomes A-F given in clause 7 above, subject to the previous decisions made, and described in detail in clause 9.

Having completed the examination of a candidate for a third time, the examiners may recommend any one of the Outcomes A, B, or F given in clause 7 above, as described in detail in clause 9.

Where a candidate is required to revise and re-submit their thesis, the revised thesis and, where required, a report indicating the specific changes made must be submitted via the [Research Thesis Digital Submission \(RTDS\) application](#).

9. The recommendations available to the examiners are as follows. Further guidance including indicative criteria for all outcomes is available in the [Policy and Guidance on Research Degrees](#).

Outcome A: Leave to supplicate for the degree of Master of Letters without any further amendments to the thesis.

In making this recommendation, the examiners must be satisfied, and include statements in their report, that the student fulfils the requirements for the award of the Degree of Master of Letters as set out in clause 6 above.

Outcome B: Leave to supplicate for the degree of Master of Letters following minor corrections

This outcome should be chosen if the examiners are satisfied that the candidate's thesis is of sufficient merit to qualify for the degree but consider, nevertheless, that before the thesis is deposited the candidate should make minor corrections. The examiners must require the candidate to correct the thesis to their satisfaction before they submit their report.

A period of two months will be available for a candidate to make the necessary corrections.

Examiners may make a decision to require minor corrections without first recommending this to the relevant Board for approval. The examiners should agree between themselves which of them will consider and sign-off the corrected thesis.

In the unlikely event that an examiner is unhappy to sign-off the corrections and a student is unable or unwilling to make further corrections, the matter will be referred to the other examiner involved in the examination. If the examiners cannot agree on a course of action, the matter should be referred to the relevant Board for a decision. If the Board determines that a student should make the corrections but they are unwilling or unable to do so, then leave to supplicate cannot be granted. Students who are unhappy with such a decision may submit an appeal or complaint if they meet the criteria for consideration as outlined in the respective procedures.

Outcome C: That the candidate should re-submit following major corrections to the thesis

This outcome should be chosen if the examiners are satisfied that the candidate's thesis is of sufficient potential merit to qualify for the degree but consider, nevertheless, that before the thesis is deposited the candidate should make major corrections. They should report this preliminary recommendation to the Board with a description of the major corrections which they require the candidate to make before the Board confirms its recommendation.

Where the examiners make this recommendation, and the Board, considering the extent and nature of the major corrections, takes the view that the recommendation ought to be reference of the thesis back to the candidate in order that the candidate may revise it for re-examination, the Board may, exceptionally, ask the examiners to review their recommendation.

Leave to supplicate following major corrections to the thesis will not normally require a further viva examination (circumstances where a further examination may be required are outlined below).

A period of six months will be available for a candidate to make the necessary changes. The examiners should be provided with the corrected thesis and a summary list of responses to their points from the candidate (if appropriate). Both examiners should confirm that they are satisfied with the changes before recommendations are made to the appropriate Board. If both examiners are content that the required corrections have been satisfactorily addressed, leave to supplicate may be granted without a further oral examination.

In cases where the examiners consider that they are unlikely to recommend leave to supplicate for the degree of Master of Letters to the relevant Board, a viva examination must be held. The examiners should notify the Board of their intent to hold a viva. The same outcomes as for Outcome D below are available as a consequence of the viva.

Outcome D: That the candidate should undertake major corrections of the thesis, followed by a mandatory viva

If the examiners are satisfied that the candidate's thesis is of sufficient potential merit to qualify for the degree but consider, nevertheless, that before the thesis is deposited the candidate should make major corrections and be re-examined, they should report this preliminary recommendation to the Board with a description of the major corrections which they require the candidate to make before they confirm their recommendation.

Where the examiners make this recommendation, and the Board, considering the extent and nature of the major corrections, takes the view that the recommendation ought to be reference of the thesis back to the candidate, the Board may, exceptionally, ask the examiners to review their recommendation.

A period of six months will be available for a candidate to make the necessary changes. In advance of the re-examination, the examiners should be provided with the corrected thesis and a summary list of responses to their points from the candidate (if appropriate). Following re-examination, no further outcome of major corrections (either Outcome C or Outcome D) is permitted.

Outcome E: Reference back of the thesis for further work followed by re-examination for the degree of Master of Letters

This outcome should be selected if the Board considers it necessary to refer the student's thesis back in order that the student may present it for re-examination for the degree of Master of Letters.

The revised thesis must be submitted not later than 12 months after the candidate was notified of the outcome of the examination.

If the examiners recommend reference back of the student's thesis, they shall annex to their report to the Board a statement (for transmission to the candidate) setting out the respects in which the thesis falls below the standard required for the degree of Master of Letters. In exceptional cases, if the examiners are unable to state how, within the time allowed, the thesis can be altered to reach the standard of a Master of Letters, they should make this statement and the relevant Board should be notified.

Following re-examination, no further outcome of reference back (this Outcome) is permitted.

Outcome F: That the candidate's application for leave to supplicate should be refused (fail)

The examiners may determine that the standard of the thesis is such that a candidate should be refused leave to supplicate for the degree of Master of Letters. In such instances, the examiners should set out their reasons for reaching this conclusion within the report.

10. On receipt of the examiners' report the Board shall reach a decision on whether to accept the examiners' recommendation, provided that no candidate shall be given leave

to supplicate for the degree of Master of Letters unless the examiners have made the statements required in clause 6 above.]

[For students submitting their thesis for the first time before Sunday of Week 1 of MT 2025:

6.11. Having completed the examination of a candidate for the first time, the examiners may make recommendation (i) or (ii) below only. Having completed the examination of a candidate who has revised and re-submitted their thesis, the examiners may make any one of recommendations (i) to (iii). ~~[For all students submitting their thesis for the first time from MT 2019:~~ Where a candidate is required to revise and re-submit their thesis, the revised thesis and, where required, a report indicating the specific changes made must also be submitted via the Research Thesis Digital Submission (RTDS) application.]

The recommendations are:

(i) that the candidate should be granted leave to supplicate for the Degree of Master of Letters. In this case the examiners must include in their report statements that:

1. the candidate possesses a good general knowledge of the field of learning within which the subject of the thesis falls;
2. that the candidate has shown competence in investigating the chosen topic;
3. that the candidate has made a worthwhile contribution to knowledge or understanding in the field of learning within which the subject of the thesis falls;
4. that the thesis is presented in a lucid and scholarly manner;
5. that it merits of the award of the Degree of Master of Letters.

Examiners shall bear in mind that their judgement of the extent of the candidate's contribution to knowledge or understanding of the relevant field of learning shall take into account what may reasonably be expected of a capable and diligent student after two years of full-time study in the case of a full-time student, or twelve terms in the case of a part-time student.

If the examiners are satisfied that the candidate's thesis is of sufficient merit for the degree but consider, nevertheless, that before the thesis is deposited the candidate should make minor corrections (which are not sufficiently substantial to justify reference back for re-examination), they must require the candidate to correct the thesis to their satisfaction before they submit their report. If the candidate has not completed these corrections within one calendar month of the date of the oral examination, their name shall be removed by the Registrar from the Register of Students for the Degree of Master of Letters, provided that the board may, on good cause shown by the candidate, grant an extension of time of one further calendar month in which the candidate may fulfil this requirement before the removal of their name from the Register. No subsequent extension shall be granted, but it shall be open to a candidate whose name has been removed from the Register of Students to apply to the Board for reinstatement as a Student for the Degree of Master of Letters. The application should have the support of their society and supervisor, a copy of their

thesis incorporating the required corrections should have been submitted to the relevant Board, and such reinstatement fee as may from time to time be prescribed by Council should have been paid. Leave to supplicate shall not be granted until this fee has been paid.

Permission for reinstatement to the Register of Students may be granted by the Board within six months of the date the student was notified of the outcome of their examination.

Exceptionally, a candidate who is not able to apply for reinstatement within that timeframe may make an application to Council's Education Committee for reinstatement to the Register of Students. Such candidates must meet the requirements for reinstatement by the Board and in addition must provide a statement explaining why it is reasonable for Education Committee to permit their reinstatement and outlining the circumstances that have prevented earlier submission. For such applications, Education Committee will consider the length of time since the student was last examined, the seriousness of the causes for the delay, and the views of the student's department/faculty, supervisor and college. Education Committee will not normally consider applications if sixty months or more have elapsed since the notification of the outcome of the examination.

(ii) that the board should refer the thesis back to the student in order that the student may revise it for re-examination. If the examiners so recommend they shall annex to their report to the board a statement (for transmission to the student) setting out the respects in which the thesis falls below the standard required for the degree. If the board adopts this recommendation the student shall retain the status and obligations of a Student for the Degree of Master of Letters, and may apply again for the appointment of examiners, in accordance with the procedure laid down in this subsection, not later than the third term after that in which the board gave permission so to reapply. If such permission shall have been given by a board during a vacation, it shall be deemed to have been given in the term preceding that vacation. On re-submission of the thesis, students should submit a separate report indicating the specific changes made. The word limit for the accompanying report shall be 1,000 words.

If the student is unable to apply again for the appointment of examiners within three terms, no subsequent extension shall be granted, but it shall be open to a candidate whose name has been removed from the Register of Students to apply to the Board for reinstatement as a Student for the Degree of Master of Letters. The application should have the support of their society and supervisor, a copy of their thesis incorporating the required changes should have been submitted to the relevant Board along with a separate report indicating the specific changes made, and such reinstatement fee as may from time to time be prescribed by Council should have been paid. Leave to supplicate shall not be granted until this fee has been paid.

Permission for reinstatement to the Register of Students may be granted by the Board within twenty-four months of the date the student was notified of the outcome of their examination.

Exceptionally, a candidate who is not able to apply for reinstatement within that timeframe may make an application to Council's Education Committee for reinstatement to the Register of Students. Such candidates must meet the requirements for reinstatement by the Board and in addition must provide a statement explaining why it is reasonable for Education Committee to permit their reinstatement and outlining the circumstances that have prevented earlier submission. For such

applications, Education Committee will consider the length of time since the student was last examined, the seriousness of the causes for the delay, and the views of the student's department/faculty, supervisor and college. Education Committee will not normally consider applications if sixty months or more have elapsed since the notification of the outcome of the examination;

(iii) that the board should refuse the candidate's application for leave to supplicate.

7.12. In each case the examiners must embody in their report, in support of their recommendation, an account of the scope, character, and quality of the candidate's work.

8.13. On receipt of the examiners' report the board shall reach a decision on whether to accept the examiners' recommendation, provided that no candidate shall be given leave to supplicate unless the examiners have made the statements required in clause **611** (i) above.]

9.14. A candidate who has been granted leave to supplicate by a board must submit a finalised electronic copy of the thesis, as approved by the examiners, to the Oxford Research Archive in line with the requirements of the General Regulations governing Research Degrees. This copy must be submitted no later than the end of the fifth day before the date of the degree ceremony booked by the candidate for conferral of their degree. Permission to supplicate shall in all cases be conditional upon fulfilment of these requirements. No corrections, changes or additions of any kind shall be made to the thesis after the board has granted a candidate leave to supplicate.

10.15. In an exceptional case in which a board is unable to accept the examiners' recommendation, or in which the examiners cannot reach an agreed recommendation, the board shall have power to appoint one or two new examiners as it deems necessary, to conduct such further examination of the candidate as the board may require. This additional examination is a continuation of the examination process and the outcomes that were available to the original examiners, as defined in clause 8 above (clause 11 for students submitting before MT 2025) are available to the new examiners. The board shall make a report on any such case to the Education Committee.

[For students submitting their thesis for the first time before Sunday of Week 1 MT 2025:

14.16. The board may exempt a candidate who is being re-examined under the provisions of clause **611** (ii) above from the oral examination, provided that the examiners are able to certify that they are satisfied, without examining the candidate orally, that they can recommend to the board in the terms required by clause **611** (i) above that ~~he or she~~ the candidate be given leave to supplicate for the Degree of Master of Letters.]

[For students submitting their thesis for the first time on or after Sunday of Week 1 MT 2025:

17. If the candidate has not completed the required corrections or amendments to the thesis within the timeframe specified, their name shall be removed by the Registrar from the Register of Students for the Degree of Master of Letters. It shall be open to a candidate whose name has been removed from the Register of Students to apply to the

Board for reinstatement as a Student for the Degree of Master of Letters. The application should have the support of their society and supervisor, a copy of their thesis incorporating the required corrections should have been submitted to the relevant Board, and such reinstatement fee as may from time to time be prescribed by Council by regulation should have been paid. Leave to supplicate shall not be granted until this fee has been paid. In addition, those students who were required to make major corrections or whose thesis was referred back shall be required to submit a separate report, via the Research Thesis Digital Submission (RTDS) application, indicating the specific changes made.

Permission for reinstatement to the Register of Students may be granted by the Board within the timeframes given in the table below. In each case, the period should be calculated from the date the student was notified of the outcome of their examination.

<u>Outcome of the examination</u>	<u>Time permitted for resubmission</u>	<u>Reinstatement permitted by the Board within</u>
<u>Minor corrections</u>	<u>2 months</u>	<u>6 months</u>
<u>Major corrections</u>	<u>6 months</u>	<u>12 months</u>
<u>Reference back</u>	<u>12 months</u>	<u>24 months</u>

Exceptionally, a candidate who is not able to apply for reinstatement within the timeframes given in the table above may make an application to Council's Education Committee for reinstatement to the Register of Students. Such candidates must meet the requirements for reinstatement by the Board and in addition provide a statement explaining why it is reasonable for Education Committee to permit their reinstatement and outlining the circumstances that have prevented earlier submission. For such applications, Education Committee will consider the length of time since the student was last examined, the seriousness of the causes for the delay, and the views of the student's department/faculty, supervisor and college. Education Committee will not normally consider applications if sixty months or more have elapsed since the most recent notification of the outcome of the examination.]

42- 18. It shall be the duty of the Registrar to notify the candidate of the board's decision as soon as may be. The Registrar shall also be responsible for publishing at the end of each academic year the names of those candidates to whom permission to supplicate has been granted during that year, together with a statement of the subject of the thesis written by each.

13. 19. When, on the conclusion of the investigation of a complaint made by a candidate, the Proctors recommend that a candidate be re-examined, the board shall have power to hold a new examination.

8. Create new webpage and Part. All new text

General Regulations for the Degree of Master of Letters: Part 7 Supervision, extension and suspension following examination

[For students submitting their thesis for the first time on or after Sunday of Week 1 MT 2025:

1. Following examination for the degree of Master of Letters, the right to further supervision will depend on the outcome of the examination. The outcome will also affect requests for extensions of time and suspensions from the Register of Students as outlined below.

Supervision

2. Candidates whose outcome is minor corrections should receive supervisory guidance on the changes required to facilitate a successful resubmission.

3. Candidates whose outcome is major corrections either with or without a mandatory viva (Outcome C or Outcome D) are entitled to supervision in accordance with Part 4 of this section.

4. Candidates who have received an outcome of reference back of the thesis (Outcome E) are entitled to supervision in accordance with Part 4 of this section.

Suspensions

5. Any period of suspension taken prior to first examination for the degree of Master of Letters (or Doctor of Philosophy where a student has (been) transferred to Master of Letters status following examination for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy) will not be counted against any period of suspension taken following examination. Any period of suspension taken as maternity, extended paternity or adoption leave, whether taken before or after examination for the degree of Master of Letters, will not be counted against the periods of suspension available following examination set out below.

6. Requests for suspension from candidates whose outcome is minor corrections (Outcome B) will be considered by Council's Education Committee

7. Candidates whose outcome is major corrections either with or without a mandatory viva (Outcome C or Outcome D) may submit a request to the Board for no less than four weeks and no more than twelve months of suspension. In exceptional circumstances, candidates may request further periods of suspension; such requests will be considered by Council's Education Committee.

8. Candidates who have received an outcome of reference back of the thesis (Outcome E) may submit a request to the Board for no less than four weeks and no more than twelve months of suspension. In exceptional circumstances, candidates may request further periods of suspension; such requests will be considered by Council's Education Committee.

Extensions of time

9. Candidates may only submit a request for an extension of time, following examination for the degree of Master of Letters, in exceptional circumstances; such requests will be considered by Council's Education Committee.

Submission of a revised thesis

10. Candidates who do not submit their revised thesis within the timeframe set out in Part 6, cl. 9., are no longer entitled to supervision except for any exceptional period of extension that has been approved by Council's Education Committee.]

Explanatory Notes

These changes to regulations support the implementation of revised outcomes for PGR students that were originally agreed by RDP in MT19 and which RDP has previously agreed should come into force for students submitting their PGR thesis for the first time in MT25 or later, i.e. theses submitted on or after Sunday 12 October 2025. These regulations cover submissions for DPhil, MSc(Res) and MLitt examinations.

The Research Degrees Management System Board has continued to have regular meetings about the project which includes the systems implementation of the revised outcomes for PGR students and is satisfied that the project will be able to deliver the necessary system updates to support the implementation of these regulation changes for students submitting from MT25.

The opportunity has also been taken to change the presentation of the regulations relating to PGR awards in the Examination Regulations so that they are easier to search and to link to. The model for presentation is that currently used for the [Regulations for the Conduct of University Examinations](#) and introduced in 2024 for the [Regulations on Financial Matters](#). Each of the four current regulations relating to PGR awards will be split into eight or nine separate pages, with a separate page for each of the current sections which will be renamed Parts. In addition to minor changes to support the new regulatory structure, the regulations have been updated to remove

binary gender references and to reflect that there are now four rather than three reporting periods each year.