



Graduate Research School

Application Procedures and General Information

Degree of Master by Research and Doctor of Philosophy

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What is a Master by Research programme? What do I study?

Masters programmes at UWA may be taken by research (by thesis), by thesis, coursework and dissertation, or by coursework only. The Graduate Research School administers the following masters by research (by thesis) programmes:

Architecture, Arts, Building Science, Cognitive Science, Commerce, Criminal Justice*, Curatorial Studies in Fine Arts, Economics*, Education*, Education in Applied Linguistics*, Engineering, Engineering Science, Environmental Design, Fine Arts, Industrial Relations*, Japanese Studies, Landscape Architecture, Landscape Management, Laws*, Medical Science, Music, Music Education, Philosophy, Physical and Health Education, Public Health*, Regional Development*, Science*, Science (Agriculture), Science in Dentistry, Science Education*, Science (Horticulture), Science (Natural Resources), Science (Viticulture) and Special Education**

The programmes above marked with an asterisk (*) are also available by way of thesis and coursework or coursework only; for information and guidelines on these programmes and to find out about other programmes by thesis and coursework or coursework only, prospective applicants should contact the appropriate faculty office and/or consult the UWA Handbooks.

A Masters by research (by thesis) programme at UWA will normally consist of a two-year programme of independent, supervised research. A project is mutually agreed upon by a student, supervisor, Head of School and the Board of the Graduate Research School. In some cases an assessable creative component, such as an exhibition or a recital is required as well as a thesis. A Masters thesis should be a substantial work generally based on independent research which shows a sound knowledge of the subject of the research, evidence of the exercise of some independence of thought and the ability of expression in clear and concise language. The creative components are required to show technical accomplishment and imaginative resource.

If a school at UWA can provide appropriate supervision and facilities for a research project in a particular field and the Board agrees that an appropriate research topic in that area can be developed then - subject to a candidate satisfying the eligibility requirements - an application for a place in the Masters programme can be made.

What is a PhD? What do I study?

A PhD thesis must be a substantial and original contribution to scholarship, for example through the discovery of knowledge, the formulation of theories or the innovative re-interpretation of known data and established ideas. A PhD programme at UWA consists of a research project mutually agreed upon by a student, supervisor, Head of School and the Board of the Graduate Research School. If a school at UWA can provide appropriate supervision and facilities for a research project in a particular field and the Board agrees that an appropriate research topic in that area can be developed then - subject to a candidate satisfying the eligibility requirements - an application for a place in the PhD programme can be made. There are usually no examinable coursework components to a PhD.

Research and Field of Study

The proposed field of study requires the approval of your Head of School and the Board of the Graduate Research School and must be nominated prior to commencement of PhD/Masters candidature. The Board must be satisfied:

- that the area of research is confined within reasonably specified limits and may be suitably completed within the specified period of enrolment;

- that the research topic can be adequately supervised in this University and is appropriate to the degree programme selected;
- that suitable technical and other facilities are available if required.

PhD/Masters research is carried out under the direction of one or more supervisors, nominated by the relevant Head of School and approved by the Board of the Graduate Research School at the commencement of candidature. Supervisors assist in the planning and development of the thesis, but whilst students should co-operate closely with their supervisors at all stages, they should aim to develop some independence of thought and a mature critical faculty. Students may also be encouraged to participate in conferences and seminars, and to publish work.

A candidate may, with the approval of the Board of the Graduate Research School, change their field of study before enrolment or after commencement, although this is not encouraged. To change their field of study candidates must submit an application in writing through their current School (or, if not already enrolled, the school in which they have been made an offer of a place) to the Board of the Graduate Research School for its recommendation. Approval from the proposed new school is also required. A change of field may only take place if the new field is appropriate to the degree programme selected; if it is not, a fresh application for admission to a new degree programme will be required. Prior candidature may not be deducted from the time limit in the new programme if the new field of study is not in any way related to the original field of study.

Entry Requirements

Acceptance into the PhD/ Masters programme depends upon the applicant's qualifications and the ability of the designated school to provide the facilities and supervision required to support the proposed research. Although entrance requirements are subject to variation, applicants are usually expected to have a **first class or upper second class honours degree from an approved university.**

On the recommendation of the appropriate Head of School, candidates within the following categories will *normally* be permitted to enrol in the **Masters** programme:

- A candidate who holds a degree of bachelor with at least upper second class honours from an approved university; or
- A candidate who is a graduate of this University (or equivalent) and can satisfy the Board that they have had adequate research preparation since graduation; or
- A candidate who is a recipient of a University scholarship for master by research (by thesis) study awarded by the Scholarships Committee of the Board of the Postgraduate Research School; or
- A candidate who holds the degree of bachelor in any faculty of this University (or equivalent) and has since graduation passed a preliminary examination in the discipline in which research is to be undertaken; or
- A candidate who has previously undertaken work at a high enough standard towards a masters or PhD degree in this or another approved institution but has not submitted it for any degree.

For **PhD** candidature

- those who hold a Bachelor's degree with 2A Honours or better (or an equivalent qualification) from an approved university; or
- those who hold a Master's degree by research from an approved university; or
- those who hold a Master's degree by coursework which has a **substantial** research component from an approved university; or

- those who have satisfactorily completed a PhD (preliminary) from this or another approved university, in the area of study to be undertaken for the PhD *and* had a research proposal approved by the Board; or
- those who have been awarded a scholarship to study towards a PhD at this University by the Scholarships Committee.

There are additional conditions on entry for some of the Masters programmes offered by UWA. Special conditions apply to the degree of Master of Arts (Creative Writing), Curatorial Studies in Fine Arts, Education in Applied Linguistics, Education, Fine Arts, Japanese Studies, Music, Science Education and Social Work. More information about these entry conditions may be found at or obtained from the Graduate Research and Scholarships Office.

English Language Competency

Applicants should note that acceptance by the Head of the relevant School implies that the candidate's English language proficiency is adequate. The following **minimum English proficiency requirements** must be satisfied by applicants for the degree of PhD/Masters:

Qualification through Western Australian Tertiary Entrance Examination or equivalent (pass in English, English Literature or English as a Second Language)	
GCE Ordinary Level English	C6 or higher
TOEFL (Paper-Based total)	550
TOEFL (Computer-Based total)	213
IELTS	6.5 (no individual band less than 6.0)
Cambridge Certificate of Proficiency in English	B grade
International Scholarship Applicants	evidence of a TOEFL score of at least 580 (paper-based) or 237 (computer-based) and a Test of Written English (TWE) of 4.5, or IELTS score of 6.5 with no individual band less than 6.0.

Higher scores are required for some applicants:

For those intending to apply for the International Postgraduate Research Scholarships, the requirement is a TOEFL score of 580 (or 237 computer-based total) with TWA of 4.5, or IELTS of 6.5 with no individual band less than 6.0. The Australian government visa regulations require higher scores for applicants from some countries.

Higher Degree by Research (Preliminary) Programme - A Course of Supervised Research Preparation

If an applicant does not meet the normal entrance requirements for the Masters or PhD programme they may be permitted to enrol in a Higher Degree by Research (Preliminary) programme on the recommendation of the Head of School and with the approval of the appropriate faculty. For more information prospective candidates should contact the appropriate faculty office.

The course of study and research for the Higher Degree by Research (Preliminary) is determined by the Head of School and usually involves a combination of coursework units and research projects over a period of one year full-time. Although the Higher Degree by Research (Preliminary) programme is considered a preparatory year for PhD or Masters by Research candidature, entry to the PhD or Masters by Research **is not** automatic. At the completion of the term for a Higher Degree by Research (Preliminary) programme, the Head of School must provide the Board with an assessment of the work completed and a recommendation on the suitability of the candidate for enrolment into the PhD programme. A research proposal must be submitted as part of the application.

Application Procedures

Students seeking admission to PhD or Masters by Research candidature may apply at any time of the year as the programme is not run on a term or semester basis. However, applicants for the MPsych/PhD, MClinAudiol/PhD, MForSc/PhD and the MBBS/PhD should be aware that they may only commence these programmes at the beginning of an academic year.

Whom do I contact?

Prospective candidates should obtain information related to their specific area of research interest from the intended School and where possible, consult the appropriate Head of School or Postgraduate Coordinator regarding the availability of supervision and facilities for the proposed field of study before lodging a formal application. If a prospective student is not sure if there are appropriate supervisors at UWA it might be useful to consult UWA's searchable research specialists list which is available at <http://directory.uwa.edu.au/specialists/> . A list of contact people for the various schools at UWA is available at : <http://www.postgraduate.uwa.edu.au/page/41554> . Before meeting the School representative or prospective supervisor it is often useful to prepare a brief (max 250 words) outline of the proposed area of study.

For further and more detailed information on courses, contacts and application procedures prospective candidates may also wish to visit the Graduate Research and Scholarships Office Website at <http://www.postgraduate.uwa.edu.au> .

Application

When an application has been received that has not already been signed by the Head of School it is sent to the designated School. The signature of the Head of School recommends the supervisor/s, commencement date and field of study. The application is then considered in full by the Dean of the Graduate Research School. The application process normally takes between four and six weeks. Application forms are available on our website at <http://www.postgraduate.uwa.edu.au/page/46501> .

Applications must include all relevant items on the Checklist of Information to be provided with Application as set out on Page 2 of the Application Form.

New Applicants - Permanent Residents/Citizens of Australia including Enrolled/Current UWA Students applying for candidature.

Applicants who are permanent residents of Australia and have not been previously enrolled at this University, should forward **two copies** of the application form to the Graduate Research and Scholarships Office in Hackett Hall.

For candidates applying on the basis of an enrolment in or a partially completed masters programme, the Board of the Graduate Research School will normally treat the work previously undertaken at another institution as part of the programme required for the degree of Master at this University and deduct the period of prior candidature from the maximum time limit of the Masters programme at UWA. In such cases, the Board will determine the period during which the student will be required to pursue supervised research and study for the Masters degree of this University. Approved applicants will be required to provide proof of withdrawal from their other studies and evidence of any previous Research HECS-exemption award (RHEA) or Research Training Scheme (RTS) funding prior to enrolment in the Masters programme at UWA.

Candidates who are applying on the basis of enrolment in or partial completion of PhD studies at another institution or on the basis of a UWA PhD Preliminary programme must also include Details of Proposed Research, set out following the UWA *Guidelines for preparing Research Proposals/Details of Proposed Research for candidates/applicants for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy*. (This document is available at <http://www.postgraduate.uwa.edu.au/page/46501>)

The Board of the Graduate Research School will normally treat work already done as part a PhD programme at another institution as part of the degree of PhD at this University and deduct the period of prior candidature from the maximum time limit of the PhD programme at UWA. In such cases, the Board will determine the period during which a candidate will be required to pursue supervised research and study for the PhD Degree of this University. Approved applicants will be required to provide proof of withdrawal from their other studies prior to enrolment in the PhD programme at UWA and evidence of any prior RHEA and/or RTS funding.

New Applicants - International Students (Full-Fee Paying) including Enrolled/Current UWA Students applying for candidature.

All overseas applicants who are not permanent residents of Australia are classified as full-fee paying students who are required to pay fees between \$14,000 and \$28,000 (depending on the School) per annum for the duration of the Masters programme. The fees are subject to change. **All international applicants must contact the International Students Officer, Postgraduate Studies for information regarding procedures for application and the availability of research scholarships for overseas students.**

Enrolment

Successful applicants will receive a detailed letter which clearly states the terms of enrolment and requirements for candidature. This letter is an authority to enrol and must be taken to Student Administration, Hackett Hall by the specified enrolment date. Any intended variations to the terms of enrolment must be approved by the Head of School and the Board of the Graduate Research School.

Concurrent Enrolment

PhD/Masters by Research students may be permitted (or required) to enrol concurrently in undergraduate units pertinent to their field of research, with the approval of the Head of School and the Board. Students may only enrol in a maximum of 24 points of coursework units during their candidature. PhD students may also, subject to certain conditions, apply for and enrol concurrently in postgraduate coursework programmes along with their PhD programme. Candidates may not be enrolled concurrently in units during the year in which they intend to submit a thesis and are required to make satisfactory progress in both courses in order to continue in those courses.

Application to Upgrade from Masters by Research (By Thesis) At UWA to the PhD At UWA

Students who have completed outstanding work during the first year of their Masters and have not yet been awarded the degree, may be considered for transfer to PhD candidature with appropriate credit for work done as part of their Master's degree. The period of prior candidature in the masters programme will be deducted from the maximum time limit for completion of the PhD. In order to have a transfer considered by the Board of the Graduate Research School, candidates must submit, through the Head of School an APPLICATION TO UPGRADE form accompanied by Details of Proposed Research following the guidelines as set out following the *UWA Guidelines for preparing Research Proposals/Details of Proposed Research for candidates/applicants for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy*. On acceptance by the Board of the Graduate Research School, applicants will be advised in writing to complete a *Change of Enrolment Form* at Student Administration, Hackett Hall. Upgrades normally take two to three weeks.