



**Senate**

<b>Paper Title</b>	<b>Chair's action</b>
<b>Outcome requested</b>	Senate is asked to <b>note</b> the detail of chair's actions taken since the last meeting of Senate, not covered as a separate item on the agenda.
<b>Points for Senate members to note and further information</b>	There has been one Chair's action since the last meeting of Senate held on 21 October 2021: 1. Approval of the new award title of Master by Research (ResM)
<b>Questions for Senate to consider</b>	n/a
<b>Regulatory/statutory reference points</b>	n/a
<b>Strategy and risk</b>	n/a
<b>Reporting/consideration route for the paper</b>	n/a
<b>Authors</b>	n/a
<b>Sponsor</b>	n/a



## **Chair's Action**

Approval of the new title of Master by Research (ResM)

## **Summary**

Chair's action was taken to approve the introduction of the new award of Master by Research (ResM) on the recommendation of the Research Degrees Programmes and Examinations Board, with the approval of the Education Quality and Standards Board.

**Appendix A** contains the paper submitted to the Research Degrees Programmes and Examinations Board.



## Senate

<b>Paper title</b>	<b>New award title of Master by Research (ResM)</b>
<b>Outcome requested</b>	<p>Senate is <b>asked to approve</b> the introduction of the new award of Master by Research (ResM) on the recommendation of the Research Degrees Programmes and Examinations Board, with the approval of the Education Quality and Standards Board.</p> <p>If approved, Council will be asked to approve the addition of the award of Master by Research to Ordinance A16, section 1.5 denoting research degrees (FHEQ level 7) awarded by Queen Mary.</p>
<b>Points to note and further information</b>	<p>The proposal is to create master's level programmes of supervised research of one calendar year to be examined entirely by submission of a thesis and an oral examination. There will be no taught modules. The programme differs from the Master of Research as the focus is on a specific subject, studied through research methods.</p> <p>The impetus to bring forward the proposal now is that there are opportunities to recruit international students onto one-year programmes of research at Master's level, both as part of an articulation arrangement (i.e. to provide the second year of a two-year Masters programme at their home institution) and to provide a route for entry to a PhD at Queen Mary. The opportunity to offer the Master's by Research as a standalone programme will be available to all schools and institutes.</p> <p>The paper considered by the Research Degrees Board is annexed for information.</p>
<b>Questions to consider</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) New regulations for Master's by Research programmes are being prepared. The draft regulations will be presented to the Research Degrees Programmes and Examinations Board and to EQSB for comment and approval.</li> <li>(ii) The Research Degrees Board will prepare guidance on programme requirements and student processes to assist schools and institutes in preparing new programme proposals.</li> <li>(iii) The QAA Characteristics Statement for Master's degrees identifies Master by Research programmes with these designations: MbyRes or MRes or ResM. The use of ResM is recommended to distinguish clearly between Master of Research (MRes) programmes with taught modules and this research only programme.</li> </ul>
<b>Regulatory/statutory reference points</b>	<p>The key external reference points are the UK Quality Code for Higher Education, in particular the Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies (the Qualifications Frameworks) and the Qualification Characteristics Statement for Master's Degrees.</p>

	New programme proposals will be considered by the Research Degrees Programmes and Examinations Board.
<b>Strategy and risk</b>	<p><b>Queen Mary Strategy 2030</b> The programme objectives align with the strategic aims to innovate in and develop education programmes, increase research student numbers, and expand opportunities to carry out research to a broader group of students who cannot afford the funding or time to study on a standard PhD.</p> <p><b>Risk</b> No strategic risks are anticipated. Master's by Research degrees are offered by many UK universities.</p>
<b>Reporting/ consideration route for the paper</b>	<p>Approvals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The proposal to introduce the Master's by Research award was considered and approved by the Research Degrees Programmes and Examinations Board (RDPEB) on Wednesday 17 November 2021.</li> <li>• EQSB approval by the Vice-Principal (Education) under Chair's action on 24.11.21</li> </ul> <p>Subject to approval by Senate, the proposal will be recommended to Council's Governance Committee to approve the addition of the new award title to Ordinance A16 1.5 – Research Degrees (FHEQ level 7).</p>
<b>Sponsors</b>	Jonathan Morgan, Chief Governance Officer and University Secretary  Professor Tim Warner, Dean for Postgraduate Research
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## Research Degrees Programmes and Examinations Board

### Masters by Research

1. There are opportunities to recruit international students onto one-year programmes of research at Masters level both as part of an articulation arrangement (i.e. to provide the second year of a two-year Masters programme at their home institution) and to provide a route for entry to a PhD at Queen Mary. By contrast with existing, modular MRes and MA/MSc 'by Research' programmes at the University, this proposal is to create programmes of supervised research lasting one calendar year, without modules and assessed entirely through a thesis and oral examination. The proposed programmes would therefore come under the purview of the Regulations for Postgraduate Research Programmes and the Research Degrees Programmes and Examinations Board.
2. The proposed Masters by Research programmes would share the following characteristics.
  - [a] Schools and Institutes would ideally admit students as cohorts, rather than as individuals, starting in September, January or April to work on cognate research topics identified in advance. In the case of an articulation arrangement, this would be worked out in discussion with the partner institution. This approach would enable Schools and Institutes to plan academic workloads in relation to supervision and assessment.
  - [b] Recognising that the proposed programmes comprise only research, and that there is no alternative exit qualification for students who do not successfully complete, the entry criteria would need to include previous engagement with research skills training at Masters' level. However, the entry criteria and admission process would differ from those for a PhD and it would be inappropriate for students to transfer or progress onto a PhD programme with advance standing.
  - [c] Progress in-year would be monitored through the supervisory process.
  - [d] The scope of the thesis would be what might reasonably be expected after one year's full-time study, the length being between 25,000 and 35,000 words (subject to validation through a benchmarking exercise). In other respects it would align with the requirements of an MPhil thesis.
  - [e] Schools and Institutes would ideally identify a panel of internal and external examiners to assess the entire cohort. Research Degrees Programmes and Examinations Board may wish to consider to what extent it wishes to simplify processes in such cases.
  - [f] Over time, consideration would need to be given, in liaison with Taught Programmes Board, to the naming of qualifications and achieving a proper separation between modular and research-based programmes.
3. Research Degrees Programmes and Examinations Board is invited to consider the proposal and advise on implementation, noting the need to move quickly in certain disciplines to pick up opportunities that are already in the pipeline.

Jonathan Morgan  
Chief Governance Officer and University Secretary  
12 November 2021