

# National Taiwan Normal University Master's and PhD Graduate Degree Examination Guidelines

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1. These guidelines were established according to the University Act, Enforcement Rules of the University Act, Degree Conferral Law, and Enforcement Rules of the Degree Conferral Law.
2. Graduate students who satisfy the following requirements may apply to take master's degree or PhD Graduate Degree Examination:
  - (1) Eligibility for taking master's Graduate Degree Examination:
    1. Students who have completed one year's study in a master's program, and PhD students seeking to obtain master's degrees.
    2. Having completed all compulsory courses and credits required by the department, and having accumulated a total of no less than 24 credits, or any higher number of credits as the department may require, subject to the Ministry of Education's approval.
    3. Having completed a preliminary draft of his or her thesis.
  - (2) Eligibility for taking PhD Graduate Degree Examination:
    1. Students who have completed two year's study in a PhD program, and students who have been directly admitted into a PhD program and have completed two year's study.
    2. Having completed all compulsory courses and credits required by the department, and having accumulated a total of no less than 18 credits, or no less than 30 credits for directly admitted students (including credits earned during the first year of the master's program), or any higher number of credits as the department may require, subject to the Ministry of Education's approval.
    3. Students who have passed the PhD candidate review.
    4. Having completed a preliminary draft of his or her thesis.
3. The following rules apply when applying for master's or PhD Graduate Degree Examinations:
  - (1) Applications must be submitted to the enrolled department or graduate institute before the end of May or November (or end of July for summer courses) each year.
  - (2) The application must be written using the designated form with the following documents attached:
    1. A transcript of past grades.
    2. A copy of the draft and abstract for the student's thesis. Graduate students of art and applied technology studies may submit their thesis in the form of art creations or exhibitions supported with written or technical reports. An abstract shall also be drafted. The thesis (including abstract) should be written in Chinese.  
Theses that have previously been used to acquire other degrees may not be submitted again.

3. A letter of recommendation from the advising professor.
- (3) Once the department chair or the director of the graduate institute has approved, the student may proceed to take the scheduled exam.
4. The graduate degree examination shall proceed according to the following procedures:
  - (1) Assemble a master's or PhD exam committee.
  - (2) Each department or institute will announce the date of its master's and PhD exams.
5. Assembly of a master's exam committee shall comply with the following:
  - (1) There should be three to five committee members; at least one-third (inclusive) of the members must be from outside the university (including part-time faculty members). All committee members shall be appointed by the President. The convener of the master's exam committee shall be headed by a committee member who is from outside the university. No master's degree student may have a spouse or a third-degree relative or closer, by blood or by marriage, as the advising professor or an exam committee member for the enrolled course.
  - (2) In addition to possessing expert knowledge on the field, creations, exhibitions or technical reports submitted by the master's students, each exam committee member must also be qualified one of the following ways:
    1. Previously employed as a professor or assistant professor.
    2. A fellow of Academia Sinica, or previously employed by Academia Sinica as a researcher or assistant researcher.
    3. Possession of a PhD degree with significant academic contributions.
    4. For rare or more specialized courses, possession of significant academic or professional contributions. Assessment standards for criteria 3. and 4. listed in paragraph 2 above shall be determined by each department and graduate institute.
6. Assembly of a PhD exam committee shall comply with the following:
  - (1) The advising professor shall provide a list of at least eight candidates for the PhD exam committee, from which the department chair, graduate institute director or the administrative board will select a group of five to seven committee members. At least one-third (inclusive) of committee members must comprise candidates from outside the university. The role of convener shall be appointed by the department chair, the graduate institute director or the administrative board, and should primarily be headed by a member from outside the university. The advising professor may not be appointed as the convener. No PhD student may have a spouse or a third-degree relative or closer, by blood or by marriage, as the advising professor or an exam committee member for the enrolled course.
  - (2) In addition to possessing expert knowledge on the field, creations, exhibitions or technical reports submitted by the PhD students, each exam committee member must also be qualified one of the following ways:
    1. Previously employed as a professor.
    2. A fellow of Academia Sinica, or previously employed by Academia Sinica as a researcher.
    3. Previously employed as an assistant professor or an assistant researcher of

Academia Sinica, with significant academic contributions.

4. Possession of a PhD degree with significant academic contributions.
5. For rare or more specialized courses, possession of significant academic or professional contributions. Assessment standards for criteria 3. to 5. listed in paragraph 2 above shall be determined by each department and graduate institute.

7. Graduate Degree Examination must comply with the following principles:

- (1) Once the request for Graduate Degree Examination is approved, PhD exam applicants will be required to submit nine copies of the finalized thesis, including abstract, whereas master's exam applicants will be required to submit five copies of the finalized thesis, including abstract. Once the thesis is reviewed and confirmed to have conformed with the relevant requirements, the Graduate Degree Examination may be arranged for a later date. The exam shall proceed in oral form, and may involve lab tests if necessary.
- (2) The Graduate Degree Examination has a full mark of 100 and a pass mark of 70. Candidates will only be tested once and scored using the average mark given by committee members. However, the candidate will be deemed to have failed the master's exam if more than half (inclusive) of present committee members give scores below the pass mark (or more than one-third, inclusive, for PhD exams). Candidates will also be deemed to have failed the course if the submitted thesis, art creation, exhibition, or technical reports are found by the master's/PhD exam committee to have involved plagiarism or fraud.
- (3) All exam committee members are required to attend committee meetings personally, and may not appoint proxies. A Graduate Degree Examination must be attended by at least two-thirds (inclusive) of total committee members, with no less than three members for master's exam and no less than five members for PhD exam. Committee members from outside the university must comprise at least one-third (inclusive) in either case, otherwise the exam may not proceed. Exams that are completed without compliance with the above will be disregarded.
- (4) Students who fail the exam but have yet to reach their maximum years of study may retake the exam in the next semester or the next year (or next summer session for summer courses). Each student may only retake the exam once, and will be given a score of 70 if they pass. Students who fail the retest will be required to withdraw from the university.
- (5) Directly admitted PhD students who have completed their maximum years of study and passed the PhD candidate review but failed the Graduate Degree Examination may still be awarded a master's degree, if the PhD thesis is rated by the PhD exam committee to have satisfied the master's level.
- (6) Every Graduate Degree Examination must conclude with a score. The candidate would be deemed to have failed the exam if no score is concluded.

8. Graduate Degree Examination are held once every semester (or once every summer session for summer courses), and must be scheduled according to policy. Under special circumstances, subject to the consent of the advising professor and the department chair, exams may be postponed until January 31 for the 1st semester or July 31 for the 2nd semester. Graduate Degree Examination and eligibility exams

may be held concurrently within the same semester (or summer sessions), provided that both of them are held within the candidate's maximum years of study.

9. Graduate students who have applied to take Graduate Degree Examination may withdraw their exams before the end of the current semester (or summer session for summer courses), if they feel unable to succeed the exam within the given semester (or summer session). Students who neither withdraw nor participate in the exam will be deemed to have failed. Students who do not complete their graduate degree examination after reaching the maximum years of study will be dismissed from the enrolled courses. No extension will be given.
10. Once the Graduate Degree Examination has finished, each department and institute shall collect from graduate students their theses signed by the oral examiner before forwarding exam results to the Office of Academic Affairs for record-keeping. Thesis submission deadlines are: first semester - end of February; second semester - August 31; summer courses - September 30. Students who do not submit their theses before the deadline and have yet to reach their maximum years of study are still required to enroll and select courses for the upcoming semester (or summer session). Students will be deemed to have graduated in the semester (summer session) they submit their theses. Students who do not submit their theses at the end of their maximum years of study will be considered to have failed the Graduate Degree Examination and will be required to withdraw.
11. Students' graduation marks are calculated as a weighted average of their average grades earned throughout the program (50% weight) and the results of their Graduate Degree Examination (50% weight).
12. Members of the graduate degree examination committee shall be notified separately in a discreet manner. Degree candidates must not participate in exam affairs that are related to their own exams.
13. Candidates may have their degrees revoked and asked to return degree certificates already issued if the submitted thesis, creation, exhibition or technical report is found to have involved plagiarism or fraud.
14. Each department and graduate institute is required to develop its own PhD candidate review policies based on these guidelines. Once approved by their respective panels, a copy of the policy shall be forwarded to the Office of Academic Affairs for future reference.
15. These guidelines have been implemented after approval by an Academic Affairs meeting and acknowledgement by the Ministry of Education. The same applies to all subsequent amendments.