

**Request for Exemption for the College of Life and Environmental Sciences
from Regulations 7.4.1 and 7.4.2 governing the award requirements and format
of thesis or reports for the MRes**

Purpose of Paper

1. APRC is asked to **consider**, and if thought appropriate, **approve** an exemption from the Regulations 7.4.1 and 7.4.2 for the College of Life and Environmental Sciences (LES), for the academic year 2010/11.

Proposal

2. The exemption relates to the following programmes:
 1. 4651 - MRes Psychology FT
 2. 4653 - MRes Cognition and Neuroscience FT
 3. 4654 - MRes Cognition and Computational Neuroscience FT
 4. 4851 - MRes Psychology PT
 5. 4853 - MRes Cognition and Neuroscience. PT
 6. 4854 - MRes Cognition and Computational Neuroscience PT
 7. 4871 - MRes Cognitive Neuropsychology and Rehabilitation PT
 8. 5202 - MRes Cognitive Neuropsychology and Rehabilitation FT
 9. 6543 - MRes Brain Imaging and Cognitive Neuroscience FT
 10. 6544 - MRes Brain Imaging and Cognitive Neuroscience PT
 11. 6699 - MRes Clinical Psychology FT
 12. 6700 - MRes Clinical Psychology PT
 13. 6864 - MRes Clinical Psychology FT
 14. 5271 - MRes Mechanistic Molecular Toxicology FT
 15. 5281 - MRes Mechanistic Molecular Toxicology PT
 16. 5702 - MRes Conservation Biology and Genetics FT
 17. 5705 - MRes Conservation Biology and Genetics PT
 18. 7420 - MRes Conservation and Utilisation of Plant Genetic Resources FT
 19. 7421 - MRes Conservation and Utilisation of Plant Genetic Resources PT
 20. 8509 – MRes Computational Neuroscience and Cognitive Robotics FT
 21. 8510 – MRes Computational Neuroscience and Cognitive Robotics PT
 22. 5959 - MRes Molecular & Cellular Biology FT
3. That the above programmes be granted exemption from Regulation 7.4.1, 7.4.2 and 7.4.4 governing the requirements for format, submission, and assessment of a report or thesis as part of the MRes; in particular:
 - Regulation 7.4.2(b) relating to the requirement for the submission of a hardbound and electronic copy of the final approved thesis/report.
 - Regulation 7.4.4 relating to the requirement for an external examiner to be appointed for each registered student;
4. That the above programmes be granted exemption from the Code of Practice on Assessment of Research Degree Theses.

5. That instead, the research components of the above programmes be assessed in a similar way to a taught dissertation; governed by Regulation 7.2.1 (f):

7.2.1 (f) The assessment of each module shall generate a single mark between 0 and 100 except in cases specified by the Senate or a delegated authority where the mark shall be pass or fail. Linked modules shall produce a single mark.

Background and Consultation

6. It was noted by the Curriculum Development Manager that a number of MRes programmes within the College of LES were being assessed outside of Regulations and not as set out in the Code of Practice for the Assessment of Research Degree Theses relating to Research Masters Degrees in the following ways:
- a. the programmes do not appoint individual internal and external examiners for each individual student;
 - b. the programmes do not use viva voce/oral examinations as set out in the Code of Practice for the Assessment of Research Degree Theses;
 - c. the programmes do not require students to submit a hard bound copy and e-thesis of the research element of the programme;
 - d. the research element of each programme is awarded a numerical mark rather than a recommendation from an internal and external examiner as set out in Section 6.5 of the Code of Practice for Assessment of Research degrees (i.e. award, award with minor corrections, etc)
 - e. The research component is assessed in line with postgraduate taught dissertations
7. ASA subsequently met with Jon Green, Director of Education for LES, to discuss this matter, and it was noted that while it would not be possible to bring these programmes into line with University legislation for the current session, as student expectation has already been set at the current levels for this year, LES are keen to align their programmes with University legislation for future academic sessions.

Argument to Support Proposal

8. The above named programmes have been assessed in a manner which is outside of regulations for several years, and to bring the programmes into line for the current academic session would mean that information provided to students at the start of the year would be incorrect, thereby disadvantaging the students on these programmes of study.
9. LES are currently conducting consultation into the assessment of the above named programmes to assess the feasibility of bringing these programmes into line with the Regulations for 2011/12 academic session. It is therefore requested that this exemption remain in place until the College has completed this consultation. This exemption, if approved, will be revisited in July 2011.

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Academic and Student Administration