

## National Central University Regulations on Degree Examinations for Postgraduate Students

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### Article 1

National Central University (hereinafter referred to as NCU) Regulations on Degree Examinations for Postgraduate Students (hereinafter referred to as the Regulations) are stipulated per the University Act, the Enforcement Rules of the University Act, and the Degree Conferral Act.

### Article 2

Departments (graduate institutes, in-service programs, and degree programs) having Master's or doctoral programs shall stipulate guidelines governing postgraduate students' study per the Regulations, and the guidelines shall be subject to review and approval by the department (graduate institute, in-service program, or degree program) committee. Subsequently, they shall be reviewed by the committee of the college and then implemented upon approval by the NCU Academic Affairs Committee. However, whether the review and approval of the college-level committee are required is decided

by each college of NCU. The guidelines governing postgraduate students' study shall include the following items:

1. Period of study: It covers the minimum and maximum periods of study for full-time students and in-service program students, respectively.
2. Regulations on course selection: They include rules for compulsory courses, minimum credits required for graduation, and credit waivers. The rule for the number of required credits for students who are enrolled via Direct Admission into Doctoral Programs shall also indicate whether the credits earned before their enrollment into doctoral programs are counted toward the total number of credits required for graduation.
3. Regulations on thesis supervision: They cover thesis advisor invitations, conditions for the replacement of a thesis advisor, and the qualifications of a thesis advisor.
4. Regulations on the qualifying examination of doctoral candidacy.
5. Requirements and procedures for undertaking the degree examination.
6. Thesis similarity comparison standard: Each department/institute shall set its own standard. The similarity index shall not exceed 35%. Departments and graduate institutes that approve the pursuit of a degree through a Thesis by Publication shall handle such cases per the "Guidelines for Thesis by Publication at National Central University," which are stipulated separately. Exceptions require approval from the relevant meeting of the department (graduate institute, in-service program, or degree program) and authorization from the Vice President of Academic Affairs.

A doctoral student may be nominated as a doctoral candidate after passing the qualifying examination; a doctoral student who has failed the qualifying examination shall be forced to withdraw from NCU. If a master's student, who was admitted into a doctoral program through direct admission, has failed to pass the doctoral candidate qualifying examination, he or she may be allowed to return to the master's program upon approval of the relevant meetings of his or her department / graduate institute / in-service program / degree program and by the president of NCU.

### Article 3

A degree examination takes the form of an oral defense. A written examination may be

held if necessary.

The thesis defense can be conducted via video conferencing only under certain circumstances upon approval of the chair of the department or institute. The thesis defense shall also be conducted in a fair, impartial, and transparent manner. The defense shall be recorded during the whole process, and the recording of the defense can be accessed only with the permission of the chair. Relevant files shall be properly stored for one year. When anyone follows relevant regulations to file an appeal regarding the defense, those relevant files shall be kept until the appeal procedure or the procedure for administrative remedies is completed.

A student pursuing a master's or doctoral degree in the fields of fine arts and applied technology may submit a work, proof of achievement accompanied by a written report, or a technical report instead of a degree thesis. A student pursuing a master's degree related to professional practice may submit a professional practice report instead of a degree thesis. The criteria for evaluating the academic equivalency of various forms of works and reports in relevant fields shall be regulated by the department, institute, or degree program and implemented upon approval of the NCU Academic Affairs Meeting.

The principles on the range of recognized materials, the form of materials, content items, and other related matters regarding the substitutions for a degree thesis submitted to a department/institute in each field covered in the preceding paragraph shall be in accordance with relevant regulations stipulated by the Ministry of Education (hereinafter referred to as MOE).

#### Article 4

A degree examination committee shall be established per the following paragraphs to conduct a degree examination.

1. A doctoral degree examination committee shall have five to nine members, and a master's degree examination committee, three to five. The committee members shall be recommended by the department (graduate institute, in-service program, or degree program) to the NCU president and appointed by the president. In terms of the number of members from outside NCU, there shall be at least two members from outside NCU in a doctoral degree examination committee and at least one member from outside NCU in a master's degree examination committee. A member outside NCU refers to a member who is not a full-time faculty member, project faculty member, or researcher (including part-time faculty hired by NCU) working at NCU. The committee members could recommend one member as the convener for the

degree examination committee; however, the thesis advisor shall not be chosen as the convener.

2. Degree examination committee members shall each have done a specialized study in the postgraduate degree candidate's research field and also have one of the following qualifications:
  - (1) A doctoral degree examination committee member:
    - A. currently serving or having served as a professor or associate professor;
    - B. being an academician at Academia Sinica, or currently working or having worked at Academia Sinica as a research fellow or associate research fellow;
    - C. having a doctoral degree and significant academic accomplishments;
    - D. having expertise in an unusual or highly specialized academic research field and having achieved significant results in his or her academic or professional field.
  - (2) A master's degree examination committee member:
    - A. currently serving or having served as a professor, associate professor, or assistant professor;
    - B. being an academician at Academia Sinica, or currently working or having worked at Academia Sinica as a research fellow, associate research fellow, or assistant research fellow;
    - C. Having a doctoral degree and significant academic accomplishments;
    - D. having expertise in an unusual or highly specialized academic research field and having achieved significant results in his or her academic or professional field.
3. The criteria for determining the qualifications specified in Items C and D in Subparagraphs 1 and 2 of the preceding Paragraph shall be set at an academic affairs meeting of the department, graduate institute, college, or degree program handling the conferral of the degree.
4. Any person within three degrees of consanguinity of any student taking the degree examination shall not serve as a degree examination committee member.

## Article 5

A postgraduate student who has fulfilled the following requirements may apply for his or her master's or doctoral degree examination.

1. Completed Academic Ethics Education Courses and fulfilled all the course and credit requirements as stipulated by his or her department (graduate institute, in-service program, or degree program).

2. Completed an initial draft of his or her thesis, and his or her thesis advisor confirmed that the topic and content of the student's thesis matched the key features and specialized research fields of the department (graduate institute, in-service program, or degree program).
3. A doctoral student shall pass a doctoral candidate qualifying examination. (Whether the qualifying examination for a master's student is required and whether a master's student has to pass the examination shall be decided by each department, graduate institute, in-service program, or degree program.)
4. Met other graduation requirements stipulated by his or her department (graduate institute, division, in-service program, or degree program).

A student who fulfilled all the requirements stipulated in all the subparagraphs of the preceding paragraph may submit a copy of each of the following documents to apply for taking his or her degree examination: an academic transcript of all years, a thesis draft, a thesis abstract, a thesis originality report that meets the criteria established by his or her department/institute, a recommendation letter from his or her thesis advisor, and the application form for the degree examination. By the deadline indicated on the NCU's academic calendar, a student may take a degree examination upon approval of his or her thesis advisor, the chairperson or director of the department (graduate institute, in-service program, or degree program), the Office of Academic Affairs, and the NCU president.

The "thesis originality report" that meets the criteria established by the student's department/institute stated in the preceding paragraph shall be provided for degree examination committee members to review at the degree examination.

A master's student who will be completing all the course and credit requirements when the semester ends may follow the application procedure regulated in Paragraph 2 to apply for taking the master's degree examination in the same semester. However, if he or she fails to complete all the course and credit requirements in that semester, the score of the degree examination taken in the same semester will not be recognized.

#### Article 5-1

Degree examination committee members shall advise a student who has passed the oral examination about the direction and guidelines for the student's thesis revision. The student shall revise his or her degree thesis based on the advice given and submit the revised thesis for review. After the review, the degree examination committee members

may sign the “Verification Letter from the Oral Examination Committee for Postgraduate Students” (hereafter referred to as the Verification Letter).

Before the completion of the thesis review, both the thesis advisor and the degree examination committee members must confirm that "the title and content of the thesis align with the characteristics and specialized research areas of the department/institute, as well as to ascertain that the thesis meets "the standards for non-disclosure or delayed disclosure."

#### Article 5-2

Following a postgraduate student’s degree examination and thesis review, the student’s department (graduate institute, in-service program, or degree program) shall submit the original copies of the student's degree examination application form and degree examination evaluation report and a duplicate copy of the student's Verification Letter to the Register Division for data entry after the Verification Letter was signed and by the semester's end as specified on NCU's academic calendar.

#### Article 6

The electronic files of a master’s or doctoral thesis and the thesis abstract shall be submitted to the institutions designated by the MOE to be archived.

A thesis, work, proof of achievement, written report, technical report, or professional practice report that has already been submitted by a student for obtaining a degree in Taiwan or abroad cannot be submitted as the thesis, work, proof of achievement, written report, technical report, or professional practice report referred to in Article 2 and Article 3. This restriction does not apply, however, if NCU has engaged in institutional collaboration with a university abroad and the two universities have jointly supervised the thesis and have separately conferred a corresponding degree.

A postgraduate student shall follow the National Central University Thesis Formatting Guidelines to complete his or her thesis.

#### Article 7

A score of 100 is the full mark of a degree examination, and a score of 70 out of 100 is considered a pass. The score of a degree examination is determined by the average of

the scores given by the examination committee members. However, if the scores given by one-half (1/2) of committee members at a master's degree examination and by one-third (1/3) of committee members at a doctoral degree examination are under 70, the student is considered to have failed the degree examination. Grading is permitted only once. A student can only take the degree examination one time in one semester. If a student fails the degree examination but has not reached the maximum period of study, he or she may take a make-up examination in the following semester or academic year. Only one make-up examination is permitted. If the student fails a second time, he or she shall be forced to withdraw from NCU.

#### Article 8

The grading criteria for students taking the degree examination shall be regulated by each department (graduate institute, in-service program, or degree program).

A student shall be deemed as having failed the degree examination if any instances of fabrication, falsification, plagiarism, ghostwriting, or other fraudulent behavior have been found in the student's thesis, work, certificate of achievement, written report, technical report, or professional practice report and have been confirmed by the degree examination committee. If the student has been conferred on a master's or doctoral degree yet has been found any instances listed above, his or her case shall be handled per National Central University Guidelines for Handling Academic Ethics Violations [in Master's and Doctoral Theses](#). If the student's case is found true by the review committee, NCU will revoke his or her master's or doctoral degree that has been conferred on him or her and announce the invalidation of the conferred diploma. NCU shall then notify the student involved to return the diploma and inform other junior colleges, universities, and relevant institutes (agencies) of the circumstances of the revocation and invalidation.

A person whose diploma is revoked and invalidated is regarded as a person being expelled from the university; even if his or her study period has not expired, he or she is not allowed to return to NCU to continue his or her studies.

#### Article 9

All members of an examination committee must attend the degree examination in person. No replacement is allowed. At least two-thirds (2/3) of the committee members shall attend the degree examination. A degree examination shall only be conducted when no less than three committee members attend a master's degree examination, and no less

than five committee members attend a doctoral degree examination.

The number of committee members from outside NCU attending the degree examination shall be in accordance with Article 4, Paragraph 1, Subparagraph 1 of the Regulations.

#### Article 10

A postgraduate student who has applied for the degree examination in a semester but is unable to complete the examination within the semester for some reason shall cancel the application for the degree examination by the end of the semester stipulated on the NCU academic calendar. Those who do not complete the cancel process and also fail to hold the degree examination by the end of the semester in which the examination is scheduled will be considered to have failed the degree examination once.

#### Article 11

If a student enrolled in a doctoral program through Direct Admission takes his or her doctoral degree examination but fails it, he or she can be conferred a master's degree if his or her qualification is considered to meet the standards of a master's degree by the doctoral examination committee.

#### Article 12

A postgraduate student who passed his or her degree examination and completed the verification of his or her thesis shall submit the regulated number of thesis copies and upload online the electronic copies of the abstract and the full text of the thesis. The student and the thesis advisor of the student shall sign the Report of NCU Student Thesis Similarity Check in person to confirm that the thesis similarity comparison result meets the requirements established by their department/institute. The signed report shall be submitted to the office of the department/institute for filing. Upon completion of graduation and school-leaving procedures within the period specified on NCU's academic calendar, the student may receive his or her diploma.

A postgraduate student who passed his or her degree examination but has not completed the verification of his or her thesis, or completed the verification but has not completed the school-leaving procedures by the date indicated on NCU's academic calendar, shall still enroll himself or herself in the following semester and complete the school-leaving procedures by the deadline in the following semester indicated on NCU's academic calendar if the student is still in his or her study period. If the procedure is not completed

by the stipulated deadline, his or her degree examination will be considered failed. A student who has reached the maximum of his or her period of study and has not completed school-leaving procedures by the specified deadline shall be forced to withdraw from NCU.

A postgraduate student who passed his or her degree examination and has completed the verification of his or her thesis yet received approval for studying abroad, participating in a student exchange program, studying in a dual degree program, having an internship, or participating in a training program may ask his or her department (graduate institute, division, in-service program, or degree program) to present an official document to the Office of Academic Affairs for approval on his or her further enrollment. Upon approval of the Office of Academic Affairs, he or she may enroll himself or herself and pay the tuition till his or her study period expires.

#### Article 13

Matters not specified herein must be subject to other relevant regulations of the MOE and NCU.

#### Article 14

The Regulations have been approved at the NCU Academic Affairs Committee Meeting prior to their implementation and have been sent to the MOE for reference. Any future amendment and revision shall follow the same administrative procedure.