Temporary Note
Regulation 26 was repealed by the Council on 7 October 2015 with effect from 1 January 2016. It applies to all examinations of theses where the thesis is submitted prior to 1 January 2016.

REGULATION 26 EXAMINATION OF THESES

Approved by Council: 30 November 2005

26.1 Submission

26.1.1 Each Thesis submitted to the University of Divinity for examination is to be presented in a manner prescribed by the Academic Board (the Board). For research Masters degrees, two copies are to be submitted; for Doctorates, three copies are to be submitted.

26.1.2 Each Thesis submitted for examination must adhere to the following requirements regarding word-length:

   a)  MA, MTheol and MPhil by minor thesis: no more than 25,000 words

   b)  MA, MTheol and MPhil by major thesis: no more than 40,000 words

   c)  DMinStuds: no more than 50,000 words

   d)  PhD and DTHeol: no more than 100,000 words,

    in each case including footnotes, but excluding bibliography, appendices, tables and illustrations.

26.1.3 The approval of the Supervisor must be obtained in writing before the Thesis is submitted for examination.

26.1.4 The Thesis must be written in an acceptable style, must be the original work of the candidate and must demonstrate both in scope and substance a mastery of the subject appropriate to the degree for which it is submitted.

26.1.5 The Thesis is to contain a full, precise and consistently styled bibliography, with footnotes corresponding in style. The examiners may require a thesis which in their opinion is poorly presented, or badly expressed, to be re-written and presented again within a fixed time.

26.1.6 A candidate must not present for examination any work submitted for a degree in another tertiary institution, but is not precluded from incorporating such work or any part thereof in the Thesis provided that the intention to do so was stated when the topic was proposed, that the Board agreed to the incorporation on the written
recommendation of the Supervisor, and that the work so incorporated is clearly indicated in the Thesis.

26.1.7 Candidates for the degrees of Master of Arts, Master of Philosophy and Doctor of Philosophy may seek approval from the Board to present their research findings in a format other than a single thesis. Allowable alternatives include:

a) An exegeted research project, where the project itself is presented in non-textual media (e.g. music composition; visual arts). Appended to such projects must be a written exegesis of the project that contributes to the production of new knowledge through a critical reflection upon the project. At least 50% of the project must be in written form

26.1.8 Candidates for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy may seek approval from the Board to present their research findings in a portfolio of publications. Such a portfolio must contain the following elements:

a) A portfolio of published or ‘in-press’ articles or book chapters on a central unifying theme

b) At least one substantial integrating article

c) A separate introduction and conclusion

d) Publications must be in (refereed) journals that appear on the Australian Research Council’s Excellence in Research Australia list; or, in the case of book chapters, in scholarly collections that are published by a recognised commercial publisher and for which there has been a demonstrated peer review process

e) A minimum of 75% of the articles/chapters must have been published or must be ‘in-press’ at the time of submission

f) Normally, all articles/chapters are to be written during the 6 years prior to submission

g) the total length of the portfolio must be between 100,000 and 120,000 words

26.2 Examiners

26.2.1 The Board of Examiners must consist of the Chair of Examiners as defined in Regulation 2.2, who oversees the examination, and examiners appointed by the Board who conduct the examination. The Board must appoint at least two examiners for a Thesis submitted for a Higher Degree by Research. For doctoral examinations, at least one examiner must be from overseas.

26.2.2 All examiners should be external to the Institution unless compelling circumstances suggest otherwise, in which situation a case must be made by the Supervisor. In circumstances where the Board approves an internal examiner, that examiner must be external to any recognised teaching institution of the Institution to which the candidate is attached. In no circumstances can both examiners be internal.

26.2.3 No person associated with the Thesis either as a Supervisor or as a subject for research is to be appointed as an examiner.
26.2.4 After considering the Thesis, each examiner is to report in writing to the Chair of Examiners, stating whether they recommend that the Thesis

a) be accepted without amendment or further examination;

b) be accepted, only conditional upon minor grammatical or typographical errors being corrected to the satisfaction of the Supervisor;

c) be accepted, conditional upon revisions being made to the satisfaction of the Board, but without re-examination;

d) not be accepted, but be permitted to be revised and submitted for re-examination by those examiners who deemed that it needed rewriting;

e) not be accepted, and not be permitted to be submitted for re-examination.

The examiners may, in addition, submit a conjoint report.

26.2.5 No Thesis is to be passed unless it is deemed to be of Honours standard. In considering a recommendation made under sub-clause 26.2.4, each examiner of a Master’s Thesis should indicate if it is to be graded at High Distinction or Distinction level.

26.2.6 A Thesis which has been revised and submitted for re-examination may only be awarded a Pass, a Pass with minor revisions, or a Fail.

26.2.7 Normally no candidate is permitted to submit a revised Thesis for re-examination more than once.

26.3 The Chair of Examiners

The Chair of Examiners is to consider the written reports of the examiners, and proceed as follows:

26.3.1 Where the Chair of Examiners recommends that the Thesis not be accepted, this conclusion is to be notified in writing to the Board.

26.3.2 Where the Chair of Examiners recommends that the candidate be required by the examiners to revise and resubmit the thesis for re-examination, this conclusion is to be notified to the Board in writing, specifying what revisions sought by the examiners are necessary. Where the recommendation of the Chair of Examiners is accepted by the Board, the candidate must be given a maximum of 12 months (full-time equivalent candidature) to re-submit. Any candidate who does not submit the revised thesis for re-examination within that period, and who does not have extenuating circumstances, will be failed.

26.3.3 Where the Chair of Examiners recommends that the Thesis be accepted, possibly subject to amendments being made but without further examination being necessary, this conclusion is to be notified to the Board in writing, specifying what revisions (if any) may be necessary, and (if applicable) what level of Honours is recommended.

26.3.4 Where the Chair of Examiners is unable to make a clear recommendation based upon the examiners’ reports, the Chair may ask the examiners to consult, recommend to the Board the appointment of additional examiner(s), or take such other steps as may enable a clear recommendation to be made.
26.3.5 Following receipt and approval of the written report of the Chair of Examiners by the Board, the Board must inform the candidate and the Supervisor in writing of the recommendation of the Chair of Examiners, and forward copies of the written reports of the examiners and of the Chair of Examiners.

26.4 Oral Defence

26.4.1 Where the Chair of Examiners is unable to make a clear recommendation based upon the examiners’ reports the Chair may, pursuant to Regulation 26.3.4, require the candidate to undergo a public Oral Defence of the Thesis.

26.4.2 The Oral Defence is to be arranged by the Board, who must appoint the Supervisor, two of the examiners and a chairperson to constitute the Oral Defence Panel.

26.4.3 In the Oral Defence the candidate is expected to show a detailed knowledge of the research area concerned, to respond to questions raised by the examiners, and to demonstrate an integrated understanding of the research topic.

26.4.4 Following the Oral Defence, the chairperson is to report to the Chair of Examiners in writing on behalf of the Panel, making recommendations as to acceptance of the Thesis or otherwise, and specifying what revisions may be necessary. Where the Panel recommends that the Thesis be accepted, possibly subject to amendments being made but without further examination being necessary, the candidate may be informed of this recommendation.

26.4.5 The Chair of Examiners, in carrying out the duties specified in 26.3 above, must also take into account the written report of the Oral Defence Panel.

26.5 Lodgement of Theses

26.5.1 The candidate must lodge with the Institution two permanently bound copies of the approved Thesis, and an electronic copy of the Thesis, prior to the degree being conferred.

26.5.2 Where a candidate is required by the University's Human Research Ethics Committee to lodge data collected during research, this data is to be lodged in electronic form with the Institution along with the bound copies of the Thesis. This data must be retained in accordance with the Records Management Policy. Unless clearance has been given in writing by the Committee, all other forms of the data must be destroyed.

26.5.3 Each bound Thesis is to be printed on archive quality A4 paper and hard-bound in royal blue cloth. On the spine is to be printed in gold the approved title of the Thesis, the name of the candidate, the approved abbreviation for the degree concerned, the word ‘UD’, and the year of conferral.

26.5.4 One copy of each bound Thesis is to be lodged with the Dalton McCaughey Library, Parkville, and one copy is to be lodged at a library designated by the candidate. The electronic copy of the Thesis is to be deposited in the University's Repository.