# Research Masters (MRes) Framework

## Scope

1. This Framework sets out the design principles for MRes programmes at York St John University, it applies to all programmes leading to this award.
2. The Framework should be read in conjunction with the University's Regulations for Master of Research Awards.

## Designation

The MRes has been designated as a research programme. In writing the Framework, we have considered the Office for Students definition of Postgraduate Research, this is paramount when designing an MRes:

*Postgraduate research students are those whose qualification aim is a research based higher degree. This is a postgraduate programme comprising a research component (including a requirement to produce original work) which is larger in terms of student effort than any accompanying taught component.*

## Programme Structure – taught modules

1. 1 x 30 credit module – Research Methods and Techniques in contemporary research enquiry.  This should be in the context of the subject area discipline with learning outcomes to be determined by the School.
2. 1 x 30 credit module – Latest Developments in the Field. Learning outcomes to be determined by the School. This module should allow the student to start reflecting on their chosen thesis topic.
3. As per the Academic Framework, 30 credits should equate to 300 hours of study.
4. For each of these modules, we would expect an assessment load of 5000 words or equivalent.
5. In exceptional circumstances (to meet the needs of PSRBs or funding bodies) some optionality will be permitted within the taught modules.  However, all modules must be 30 credits and address issues associated with research and/or research methodology.
6. All assessments will be graded.
7. These modules will be "must pass" and non-compensatable, in order to ensure that students are able to undertake research independently, safely and ethically.
8. Students cannot progress on to the thesis module until both taught modules are passed.

## Programme structure – thesis

1. 1 x 120 credit module – Thesis (production of original work).
2. One summative assessment – 20,000 words or equivalent for practice-based programmes.
3. Formative assessment is permitted but should not be credit bearing.
4. Title is - Thesis in "title of award"
5. As per the Academic Framework, 120 credits should equate to 1200 hours of study.
6. In cases where students fail the thesis component of the MRes, they will have an 8-week period in which to resubmit.

**Programme structure – further notes**

Within the programme and module specifications, colleagues should consider and note:

1. Award title – Master of Research in "XXX"
2. One permitted exit award – PGCert in Research Methods in "title of award"
3. PLOs should make explicit reference to the production of novel and independent research.
4. There should be a minimum of 4 and a maximum of 8 PLOs; these should be clearly mapped so that all cannot be met by completing the Research Methods module.
5. Clear evidence should be provided of training in contemporary research methods, techniques, and approaches to enquiry within the cognate area.
6. Programmes should be designed to ensure that all groups of learners have an equal opportunity to succeed. Please reference the YSJ Inclusive Education Framework.
7. RPL and advanced standing will not be considered for the MRes programmes as the taught modules are essential learning for the thesis.
8. All 3 modules, taught and thesis, will be exempt from anonymous marking.

**Governance**

1. All marks and awards will be ratified at School Assessment Boards and noted at Research Degrees Committee.
2. Schools will be expected to appoint External Examiners following the standard process.
3. MRes students are expected to comply with YSJ's ethical and integrity standards. Ethical review for the MRes programmes to be carried out through the PGT process.

**Supervisors**

1. A minimum of 1 supervisor must be allocated to each student for the 120-credit thesis module. Schools may choose to allocate more than one supervisor dependent on the subject area.
2. Supervisors can be any member of staff on an academic contract which is either permanent or fixed term to end after the submission of the thesis, and who has the appropriate experience and expertise.

**Admissions**

1. Entry Criteria will be 2.1 at undergraduate level, 6.5 IELTs, and subject to optional interview and research proposal (maximum length 1500 words).
2. Deviations from the entry criteria is subject to agreement at approval stage.

**Revisions to the Framework:**

| Section | Amendment | Approval / Date |
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| Governance (3) | Ethical review to be done through the PGT process. | RDC / May 2025 |
| Supervisors (2) | Clarified that they must be on a permanent contract, or fixed term to end after submission of the thesis. | RDC CA / October 2025 |
| Programme structure – thesis | Students who fail the thesis component of the MRes will have an 8-week period in which to resubmit. | RDC CA / October 2025 |
| Scope | Amended link to Regulations | RDC CA / February 2026 |