**Dissertation Submission Specifications**

Candidates are required to submit three copies of their thesis. One copy is to be hard-bound and will be placed in the library post-examination stage. Two additional soft bound copies are also required; one for each internal examiner. An electronic version of the thesis is also required. Students will therefore be required to submit their final dissertation through TurnItIn via Moodle.

**Length of Thesis**

The Masters thesis should not exceed 20,000 words, inclusive of appendices, footnotes, tables and bibliography. It is anticipated that the majority of dissertations will fall within the 12,000 to 15,000 word category. The ability to organize your thoughts and write concisely is a skill which can be developed and honed. Those students who struggle with the maximum word limit would be wise to revisit their dissertation with a critical eye as to whether it could be improved from this perspective.

**Binding Procedure**

Please allow plenty of time for the binding procedure, most bindery's offer 5 hr, 24hr and 48hr service along with normal time frames (5-7 days). Please note there may be backlogs at certain times of the year and you may be required to book an appointment slot to have your Dissertation bound.

The hard bound copies must be bound in University Blue, with gold lettering on the spine giving your name, the degree for which it is presented, and the year in which the degree is conferred - This is echoed on the cover - with the addition of the title of the thesis.

**Typing of Thesis**

The dissertation should be typewritten on A4 (29.7 x 21 cm) good quality paper with a margin of at least 1.5" (4cm) on the left-hand side. Adequate margins should also be left on the other three edges so that the bound volume can be trimmed after binding. Page numbers should be inserted at least 0.5" (1.5cm) into the page. Pages should be typed on one side only. A standard 10-pitch or 12-pitch typeface should be used with double or one-and-a-half line spacing in the body of the text.

Candidates should **carefully proofread** their dissertation for typographical errors and correct them to the satisfaction of the examiners before submitting the dissertation. Dissertations submitted in word processed form must be clearly legible, and candidates are advised to use a good quality printer and a new printer cartridge when printing their dissertation.

**Title Page**
The title should be an accurate and concise description of the contents of the dissertation. The title page should be set out as follows:

- The full title and sub-title (if any)
- The full name of the author
- The award for which the dissertation is submitted
- The name of the College
- As the last line on the page, the statement “Submitted to the National College of Ireland, (Month) (Year)”

### Abstract

An abstract in English or Irish, not exceeding 300 words, shall be bound in at the beginning of the dissertation. The summary should not extend beyond a single A4 sheet and, to facilitate this, single-spaced typing is permitted for the summary only. The author and title of the dissertation should be included in the form of a heading. The abstract should provide a synopsis of the dissertation and should state clearly the nature and scope of the research undertaken and of the contribution made to the knowledge of the subject treated. The abstract should include a brief statement, where appropriate, of the method of investigation used, and an outline of any conclusions reached. A separate copy of the abstract should accompany each copy of the dissertation submitted.

### Declaration

When submitting a dissertation, the author should indicate in a declaration that the work being submitted for examination is wholly their own work and that all materials consulted and ideas garnered in the process of researching the dissertation have been properly and accurately acknowledged. The declaration should immediately follow the abstract.

### Acknowledgements

Acknowledgements are given on the page following the declaration and should be confined to persons or institutions that have contributed to the work.

### Table of Contents

The table of contents follows the acknowledgements page. While the categories can vary depending on the nature of the dissertation, the table of contents should generally be set out as follows:
Abbreviations
Abbreviations may be used at the discretion of the author and, when used, a key should bed provided. In the case of an abbreviation not in common use, the term should be given in full at the first instance, followed by the abbreviation in brackets.

Reference List
The dissertation shall contain a full reference list in the Harvard reference style. The library has detailed explanatory notes available on referencing and bibliographical managers. Students are encouraged to approach the library staff with a view to accessing these resources.

Plagiarism
Of all the academic crimes, plagiarism – using someone else’s work without acknowledgement or, worse still, passing it off as your own – is the most serious. The penalties in cases where plagiarism and/or collusion or other forms of academic cheating have been found to have taken place are severe.
Students found to have plagiarised part of their dissertation will be subject to a disciplinary panel. If a student is found to have perpetrated on a substantial scale, especially with intention, disqualification from an examination or award may occur.