



Understanding the Master-in-Passing Pathway

A Guide to the M.Phil. and M.A. Business Research Award

Monarch's Master-in-Passing framework provides candidates with the confidence to begin doctoral study, knowing that if personal or professional circumstances change, their completed academic achievements can still lead to the award of a recognised postgraduate Master's research degree.

The Master-in-Passing Award

The concept of a “Master-in-Passing” has long been recognised within the English and Commonwealth university tradition as an academic milestone within doctoral education. Historically, universities have conferred a master's degree during the course of, or upon the successful completion of, doctoral study to recognise the attainment of postgraduate research competence prior to, or alongside, the doctoral award. While the precise regulations differ between institutions, the underlying principle of recognising advanced research achievement within a doctoral pathway is well established in higher education.

Monarch has adopted this longstanding academic tradition through its Master-in-Passing framework, adapted to reflect the structure and academic standards of its own doctoral programs. The framework provides candidates with a clearly defined pathway through which postgraduate research achievement may be formally recognised while preserving the integrity and academic distinction of the doctoral degree.

At Monarch, the Master-in-Passing is not an automatic intermediate qualification awarded after a specified period of study, nor is it based solely upon progression through the doctoral program. Rather, it is a distinct academic degree with its own academic requirements and assessment standards. Candidates who complete their doctoral degree receive the corresponding master's degree as the Master-in-Passing. Candidates who elect to discontinue their doctoral studies may instead



transfer to the corresponding master's program and complete the specific academic requirements for that degree.

Within the **Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)** pathway, the Master-in-Passing qualification is the **Master of Philosophy (Business Research)**. Within the **Doctor of Business Administration (DBA)** pathway, the Master-in-Passing qualification is the **Master of Arts (Business Research)**. Although these master's degrees form part of the doctoral framework, each is a recognised postgraduate research qualification awarded only upon successful completion of its prescribed academic requirements.

The Master-in-Exit Award

While the Master-in-Passing represents the normal academic pathway through which the corresponding master's degree is awarded upon successful completion of the doctoral program, Monarch also recognises that professional, personal, financial, or family circumstances may occasionally prevent a candidate from completing the doctorate. Rather than requiring candidates to discontinue their studies without formal academic recognition, Monarch provides a **Master-in-Exit** pathway within its Master-in-Passing framework.

The Master-in-Exit enables a candidate to voluntarily transfer from the doctoral program to the corresponding master's program and complete the academic requirements for that degree as the terminal qualification. This pathway is available at any stage of the doctoral program and is intended to provide an academically rigorous means of recognising doctoral-level research achievement while preserving the integrity and standards of both the master's and doctoral degrees.

Following formal approval of the program transfer, the candidate becomes subject to the academic regulations, assessment requirements, and tuition schedule applicable to the master's program. The doctoral degree is no longer pursued, and the candidate completes the requirements prescribed for the corresponding master's qualification.

The Master-in-Exit reflects Monarch's commitment to maintaining rigorous academic standards while recognising that doctoral study represents a significant professional and personal undertaking. It provides candidates with the assurance that, should their circumstances change, they may still complete a recognised postgraduate Master's research degree.



Master-in-Passing and Master-in-Exit Comparison

Feature	Master-in-Passing	Master-in-Exit
Purpose	Recognises the successful completion of the master's component within the completed doctoral program.	Provides an alternative pathway for candidates who elect to complete the corresponding master's degree rather than the doctorate.
Program Status	Candidate remains enrolled in the doctoral program until graduation.	Candidate formally transfers from the doctoral program to the corresponding master's program.
When Applicable	Upon successful completion of the Ph.D. or DBA.	At any stage of the doctoral program following formal program conversion.
Academic Requirements	Satisfied through the successful completion of the doctoral program.	Academic requirements of the master's program must be completed following program transfer.
Research Manuscript	Doctoral dissertation meeting doctoral standards.	Master's research manuscript.
Original Research Contribution	Required	Not Required
Oral Defense	Required	Not Required
Assessment	Dissertation examined and defended in accordance with doctoral regulations.	Master's manuscript submitted for independent academic examination.
Tuition	Doctoral tuition applies throughout the doctoral program.	Master's tuition applies from the effective date of program transfer.
Final Qualification	Ph.D. or DBA together with the corresponding Master's-in-Passing award.	Master of Philosophy (Business Research) or Master of Arts (Business Research) as the terminal qualification.

Academic Requirements for the Master-in-Exit

A candidate who elects to transfer from the doctoral program to the corresponding master's program is required to satisfy the academic requirements prescribed for the master's degree. Previous doctoral work may contribute toward these requirements where appropriate.

The principal requirement is the preparation and submission of a master's research manuscript, typically comprising five chapters, demonstrating competence in research methodology, critical analysis, scholarly argument, and academic writing. Unlike the doctoral dissertation, the master's manuscript is **not** required to make an original contribution to knowledge.



The completed manuscript is submitted for independent academic examination in accordance with the University's assessment procedures. There is no requirement to undertake an oral dissertation defense.

From the effective date of the approved program transfer, the tuition and fee schedule applicable to the master's program shall apply.

Completion of the Master's Degree

It should be noted that the award of the Master-in-Exit is not automatic upon a candidate's decision to discontinue the doctoral program. Nor is it awarded solely on the basis of work previously completed within the doctoral program.

Candidates who elect to transfer to the corresponding master's program must complete the academic requirements prescribed for that degree. The principal requirement is the preparation and submission of a completed master's research manuscript, typically comprising five chapters, suitable for independent academic examination.

In many cases, candidates will have already completed substantial portions of their doctoral research and dissertation. Consequently, the preparation of the master's manuscript is generally a straightforward process involving the adaptation, refinement, and completion of work already undertaken during the doctoral program. Nevertheless, Monarch requires the submission of a complete and coherent master's manuscript before the degree may be awarded.

This requirement reflects Monarch's commitment to maintaining the academic integrity of its postgraduate research degrees. Every master's degree awarded by the School is supported by a completed research manuscript that forms part of Monarch's scholarly record. Accordingly, incomplete doctoral manuscripts, draft chapters, research proposals, or partially completed dissertations do not, in themselves, satisfy the requirements for the award of the master's degree.

Upon successful examination of the completed Master's manuscript, the corresponding master's degree may be awarded as the candidate's terminal qualification.

The Value of the Master-in-Passing Framework

Undertaking a doctoral degree represents a significant commitment of time, effort, and personal dedication. While the overwhelming majority of candidates commence their studies with the intention of completing the Ph.D. or DBA style programs, circumstances may evolve over the course of several years of doctoral research. Professional opportunities, family responsibilities, health considerations, relocation,



or changing personal priorities may affect a candidate's ability to continue to the doctoral award.

Monarch's **Master-in-Passing** framework provides candidates with the confidence to embark upon doctoral study knowing that, should circumstances change, there remains a clearly defined and academically rigorous pathway through which their scholarly achievements may be formally recognised. Rather than leaving the doctoral program without a qualification, candidates who elect to transfer to the corresponding master's program have the opportunity to complete a recognised postgraduate research degree that reflects the academic work they have successfully undertaken.

For many candidates, the existence of the Master-in-Passing framework provides an additional measure of confidence when undertaking the doctoral journey. It reflects Monarch's commitment to recognising genuine scholarly achievement while ensuring that candidates who experience changing life circumstances have the opportunity to complete a recognised postgraduate Master's research qualification.

