

Dublin descriptors contrasting Master's and PhD

These descriptors, which aim to differentiate between Master's and Doctoral programmes, were devised by a Joint Quality Initiative informal group which met in Dublin on 18 October 2004.

	Master's	PhD
Knowledge and understanding	Provides a basis or opportunity for originality in developing or applying ideas often in a research context	Includes a systematic understanding of the field of study and mastery of the methods of research associated with that field
Applying knowledge and understanding	Problem solving abilities applied in new or unfamiliar environments within broader (or multi-disciplinary contexts)	Ability to conceive, design, implement, and adapt a substantial process of research with scholarly integrity; Make a contribution that extends the frontier of knowledge by developing a substantial body of work some of which merits national or international refereed publication
Making judgements	Ability to integrate knowledge and handle complexity, and formulate judgments with incomplete data	Capable of critical analysis and synthesis of new and complex ideas
Learning focus	Study in a manner that may be largely self-directed or autonomous	Able to promote, within academic and professional contexts, technological, social or cultural advancement
Communication	Communicate the conclusions, the underpinning knowledge and rationale (restricted scope) to specialist and non-specialist audiences (monologue)	With their peers, the larger scholarly community and with society in general (dialogue) about their areas of expertise (broad scope)

Adapted from:

http://www.tcd.ie/teaching-learning/academic-development/assets/pdf/dublin_descriptors.pdf |