

POLICY ON POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

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This policy and its rules, guidelines and procedures replace all previous policy and/or circulars pertaining to postgraduate studies and its components.

1. POLICY ON POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

It is the policy of Tshwane University of Technology to:

- 1.1 Provide a framework and procedures within which the management of postgraduate studies could be conducted in the entire university.
- 1.2 Ensure effective and quality supervision at postgraduate level by qualified supervisors
- 1.3 Promote efficient, fair and reliable assessment of postgraduate students.

2. DEFINITIONS

Assessment panel: The assessment panel for a research or structured master's degree should consist of a supervisor and a co-supervisor (if applicable) plus two external assessors (only one for structured master's degrees). The assessment panel for a Doctorate should consist of a supervisor and a co-supervisor (if applicable), two external assessors, the Head of Department, the Executive Dean of the Faculty (*ex officio*) and the Chairperson

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of the “Defence of thesis panel”. The assessment panel should be appointed by the Executive Dean, in collaboration with the HoD.

Assessor: A person accredited by the Higher Education Quality Committee (as Higher Education ETQA) to measure the achievement of the specific outcomes of a qualification and its underpinning programme. An assessor therefore is appropriately qualified to assess learning at a specified level. An appropriate qualification for the assessment of master’s degrees and doctorates will be a qualification on at least the same NQF level but preferable one NQF level higher than the level to be assessed. Supervisors will act as the internal assessors. An **external assessor** is someone who is not employed as a full-time or part-time staff member of the University who, on account of his or her experience and expertise, is appointed to assess the dissertation or thesis of a postgraduate student.

Co-supervisor: A full-time, part-time or external person from industry who, on account of his or her experience and expertise is directly involved in giving a student guidance in his or her studies, in respect of both technical and academic aspects, in the compilation (or preparation) of a dissertation or thesis in order to obtain a postgraduate qualification and to act as an assessor of that dissertation or thesis.

Colloquium: A gathering of colleagues from academic and/or other fields of expertise in order to evaluate and critique the academic merit of the presented work and the relevance to society, commerce and industry.

Defence of thesis: This is a formal discussion (assessment) about certain aspects of the doctoral thesis that forms part of the official assessment of the thesis. At this meeting the candidate has the opportunity to “defend” his or her research results and conclusions.

Dissertation: A written, scientific report on research, which is one of the requirements for obtaining a research master’s degree.

Doctorate or doctoral degree: A postgraduate qualification, with a study period of at least two years and a maximum of five years based on research and may be obtained by graduates with an appropriate M Tech degree or equivalent. It consists of original creative research, the results of which are presented in a thesis.

EXCO: The Executive Committee of the Faculty Board of a particular Faculty.

Faculty secretariat: This refers to the Office of the Executive Dean.

Higher degrees: In the context of this policy, higher degrees refer to master’s and doctoral degrees.

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Master's Degree: A postgraduate qualification, with a study period of at least one year and a maximum of three years, for students with an appropriate B Tech degree or an equivalent qualification. A **research master's degree** consists of an advanced research project, the results of which are presented in a dissertation. A **structured master's degree** is an integrated course of study consisting of a number of subjects and a research project, the results of which are presented in a mini dissertation.

Mini Dissertation: A written, scientific report on research, which is one of the requirements for obtaining a structured master's degree.

Postgraduate student: A student who is busy with a master's or doctoral degree at Tshwane University of Technology.

Postgraduate office: This refers to the section within Academic Administration designated to postgraduate studies.

Research Output: For the purpose of this policy research output is seen as publications in accredited and peer reviewed journals as well Master's dissertations and Doctoral theses completed by postgraduate students.

Scientific article: A written report on original research evaluated and accepted by peer reviewers for publication in scientific journals which appear periodically and are internationally distributed.

Study panel: The study panel should consist of the HoD, supervisor and co-supervisor (if applicable). At least one of the supervisors (preferable main supervisor) should be a full-time staff member of the University.

Supervisor: A full-time or part-time staff member of the University who, on account of his or her expertise or experience is directly involved in giving a student guidance in his or her studies, in respect of both technical and academic aspects, in the preparation of a dissertation or a thesis in order to obtain a postgraduate qualification and act as assessor of that dissertation or thesis.

Thesis: A written, scientific report on creative and original research, which is one of the requirements for a doctorate.

2.2 Abbreviations:

DRIC	Departmental Research and Innovation Committee
EXCO	Executive Committee of the Faculty Board
FB	Faculty Board
FHDC	Faculty Higher Degrees Committee
FRIC	Faculty Research and Innovation Committee
HDC	Higher Degrees Committee
HoD	Head of Department
PGO	Postgraduate Office
PGS	Postgraduate studies

3. RULES

- 3.1 The registration of postgraduate students must be conducted according to a specific procedure and steps in a specific sequence (Addendum A).
- 3.2 Academic Administration, Academic Departments and Faculties do have specific responsibilities in the entire process.
- 3.3 The process is assisted by specific documentation (Addendum B).
- 3.4 The assessment process should be consistent, fair and transparent with regard to the following:
 - 3.4.1 Appointment of external assessors
 - 3.4.2 Defence of theses (Addendum C)
 - 3.4.3 Pass requirements of Master's degrees and Doctorates (Addendum D)
- 3.5 The acceptance of students for postgraduate studies should be preceded by an audit of:
 - 3.5.1 Highest qualification of prospective students (in order to establish equivalence)
 - 3.5.2 Availability of relevant infrastructure/equipment
 - 3.5.3 Availability of staff (Permanent or Temporary) with appropriate qualifications and expertise
 - 3.5.4 Availability of a suitable project
 - 3.5.5 Availability of adequate funding for the research project
 - 3.5.6 Qualifications and Teaching load of staff
 - 3.5.7 Number of registered post graduate students in the specific academic unit
- 3.6 Supervisors and students should enter into an official agreement in order to regulate the research process (see Procedures).
- 3.7 Students can register as full-time or part-time students and the time allowed to complete the specific qualification will be determined by the University's guidelines and internal progress reports.
- 3.8 A Higher Degrees Committee (HDC), a sub committee of the Senate is established to regulate all matter related to higher degrees at TUT (see Addendum E)
- 3.9 It is possible for a student who is registered for a Master's degree, to have his/her degree upgraded to a Doctorate in accordance with the procedures and criteria set out in Addendum F.

4. PROCEDURES

- 4.1 Evaluation (for admission)
- 4.2 Granting of equivalence / status
- 4.3 Application (for registration)
- 4.4 Appointment of supervisors
- 4.5 Registration
- 4.6 Appointment with the supervisor(s)
- 4.7 Research Protocol – DRIC approval
- 4.8 Research Protocol – FHDC approval
- 4.9 Appointment of external assessors
- 4.10 Graduation
- 4.11 Extension of Study Period
- 4.12 Interruption of study period
- 4.13 Number of students per supervisor
- 4.14 Assessment of supervisors

5. DOCUMENTS

- 5.1 Addendum A: Procedures related to postgraduate studies
- 5.2 Addendum B: List of forms
- 5.3 Addendum C: Defence of a thesis
- 5.4 Addendum D: Pass requirements of master's degrees and doctorates.
- 5.5 Addendum E: Higher Degrees Committee (HDC)
- 5.6 Addendum F: Upgrade of Master's degrees to Doctoral degrees
- 5.7 Application for equivalence/status/RPL
- 5.8 Guidelines for the preparation of Dissertations and Theses
- 5.9 Guidelines for Assessors
- 5.10 Citation and Bibliographic Reference Guide

6. SIGNATURES

Date checked by Quality Promotion:		Date checked by Legal Services:	
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Addendum A

PROCEDURES RELATED TO POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

1 Information

Student obtains relevant information and forms on postgraduate studies from Academic Administration or from an academic Department.

2 Evaluation

Student makes appointment with the relevant Head of Department (HoD).

- The HoD plus a specialist in the field of study evaluates the student for admission to proposed postgraduate degree.
- If a student offers a qualification which can be considered equivalent to the specified admission requirement, he or she should apply for *granting of equivalence/status* (separate process) and pay the fee as required.
- The HoD plus the specialist in the appropriate field discuss the registration and research process, possible projects; supervisors; *financial aid* (separate process) and other matters as required.

If evaluation was not successful: Process terminated.

If evaluation was successful: If granting of equivalence/status applies, go to step 3. If not applicable go to step 4.

3 Granting of equivalence/status.

A completed application form for Granting of Equivalence/Status and supporting documents should be submitted by the HoD to the Faculty Secretariat for submission to the EXCO for approval.

The guidelines for granting of equivalence/status should be followed.

- If granting of equivalence/status is not approved: Application terminated. Faculty Secretariat sends the final document to Academic Administration for processing. A letter must be sent to the student informing him / her about the outcome of the decision.
- If granting of equivalence/status is approved: Faculty Secretariat sends the final document, typed in the correct format, to Academic Administration for processing. A letter must be sent to the student informing him / her about the outcome of the decision.

- Academic Administration submits the relevant documents to TUT Secretariat for submission to the Faculty Board for approval and to the Senate for ratification

4 Application

Student completes the Application for Postgraduate Studies form, hands it in at Academic Administration and pays the application fee.

- 5 The HoD, in consultation with the specialist and the student, selects a suitable study/research field and study panel. An application form for approval of research field and appointment of study panel is submitted to the Faculty Secretariat for submission to the Faculty Higher Degrees Committee (FHDC) for approval.

- If application for approval of study field and study panel was not successful: Application is referred back to the relevant HoD.
- If application for approval of study field and study panel was successful: The form (signed by the chairperson of FHDC) is sent, by the Faculty Secretariat, to the relevant Academic Department and to Academic Administration as confirmation that the student may now be registered. The student needs to be notified by the Faculty Secretariat.

The student registers provisionally, pending approval of his/her final research proposal by the HDC. Provisional registration implies the following:

- The student is registered for a non-subsidised offering type, for a single semester.
- A provisional registration fee (registration deposit) is payable.
- A registration card, and provisional proof of registration will be issued to the student, who will have access to the same TUT facilities as other registered students of the University.
- The HoD will submit report after six months to the Executive Dean, on the progress with the project proposal.
- The student will have six months to complete the proposal. Academic Administration will provide the Executive Dean with a monthly summarized report on the progress of all provisional registrations.
- Students who fail to meet the requirements within the allotted time, will not be allowed to proceed with official registration and will forfeit their payments (registration deposit) for provisional registration. However, an extension of

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this period may be granted by the Executive Dean on recommendation of the HoD.

- If a successful research proposal is submitted within six months, confirmation (signed by the chairperson of the FHDC) will be forwarded to Academic Administration, who will change the non-subsidised offering type to a subsidized offering type, as well as the semester registration, to a year registration.
- The student must be notified by the Faculty Secretariat.
- The Faculty Secretariat submits the relevant documents to the FHDC for approval.

Note: In the case of a structured master's degree, this step in the procedure will always follow much later, usually after completion of the subjects. Students will, however, not be allowed to register for the project unless their project proposals have been approved by the FHDC.

6 Appointment of supervisors

6.1 Supervisors of master's degree students

Supervisors of all postgraduate students should be in possession of a relevant doctoral degree.

If two supervisors are appointed, the “main” supervisor must be the holder of a Doctorate and only in well motivated cases, it would be possible to appoint a co-supervisor without a doctorate provided that such a co-supervisor has at least a Master's degree, is actively involved in research and has a record of own research output over the last two to five years.

It should also be noted that TUT is not a fully developed University but should be seen as a developing University. For this reason it is important that less experienced staff be included in study panels with experienced supervisors in order to develop the supervisory skills of all staff.

Due to the uniqueness of some of the faculties, each faculty will have to determine, seen in the context of its own uniqueness, what would constitute an acceptable research record.

6.2 Supervisors of doctoral students

Only staff members with a relevant Doctorate as highest qualification may be appointed to supervise (or co-supervise) doctoral students.

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If a staff member is appointed as the supervisor of a Doctoral student for the first time, he/she should preferably be appointed as co-supervisor together with an experienced supervisor.

All supervisors of Doctoral students should have a track record of recent publications and/or successful postgraduate students and in cases where only one supervisor is to be appointed, such person should have successfully supervised (or co-supervised) at least one Doctorate student in the last two to five years.

6.3 Appointment of external supervisors

In exceptional cases where external main supervisors have to be appointed, an internal co-supervisor must be appointed to assist the external supervisor with the project and to ensure that all the administrative functions are performed in accordance with the TUT policy. Such appointments should, however, be well motivated before being approved.

Academic Administration sends a letter of appointment to all the supervisors.

Change of study panel: When a change in the study panel occurs, step 5 and 6, excluding the registration step, is repeated.

7 Registration

Student collects completed registration form at the relevant Academic Department and then registers by paying the appropriate fee.

In cases where prerequisite subjects are required for granting of equivalence/status, the student should register for these subjects as stipulated, either prior to registering for the degree or simultaneously (depending on the conditions attached to the granting of status).

Student receives proof of registration.

The Faculty Secretariat receives confirmation of registration from Academic Administration.

Re-registration: A student needs to re-register for each academic year (conditions apply).

8 Student makes an appointment with the supervisor(s):

The supervisor(s) assist student to prepare research protocol using the guidelines provided.

In the case of a structured M degree a student continues with the subjects as stipulated.

9 Research Protocol - DRIC approval

Within a period of six months the supervisor, in consultation with the HoD, submits the provisional title and the protocol (research proposal) to the Departmental Research and Innovation Committee (DRIC) for discussion, improvement and approval (student could be present). An Evaluation Form should be completed and signed by the chairperson of the DRIC. In the case of a structured Master's degree the six months period is not applicable and the HoD must be consulted to determine a date for the submission of a protocol for the mini-dissertation.

10 Research Protocol - FHDC approval

HoD submits the following documents to the FHDC (via the Faculty Research Officer):

- Final research protocol (maximum of five to seven pages);
- DRIC approval form;
- Approval of Research Project and Confirmation of Study Panel.

If the Research Protocol is not approved by the FHDC: Refer back to the DRIC for further discussion and improvements.

If the Research Protocol is approved by the FHDC: The FHDC submits the Research Protocol and Application for Approval of Provisional Project Title and Confirmation of Study Panel form to the Higher Degrees Committee (HDC) for their approval. In cases where ethical issues are involved the protocol must first be submitted to the Ethics Committee before submission to the HDC.

If the Research Protocol is not approved by the HDC: Refer back to the FHDC for further discussion and improvements.

If the Research Protocol is approved by the HDC: The TUT Secretariat sends the final document, typed in the correct format, to Academic Administration for processing. A letter must be sent to the student and supervisors, informing them about the outcome of the decision.

The TUT Secretariat submits the documents to the FB for notification and to the Senate for ratification.

11 The supervisor(s) and student draft an agreement between them to regulate the entire research process. Issues to be addressed may include the following:

- Target dates for the submission of completed work or sections of the work
- Time allowed for supervisors to comment on work submitted
- Submission of progress reports (and frequency)
- Scheduled meetings with supervisor(s) and student etc.
- Other expectations/requirements such as presentation of results, publications, etc.

The violation of the agreement or any other disputes which cannot be resolved by the supervisor(s) and student should be referred to the Head of Department. In cases where the Head of Department is the supervisor, the issue should be referred to the Executive Dean of the Faculty.

- 12 Student **completes research work** under guidance of supervisor(s). Student present research results at conferences and seminars relevant to their field of research in consultation with their supervisor.
- 13 For research degrees a **colloquium** is arranged in consultation with the relevant HoD. Depending on the outcome of the colloquium, the supervisor advises student on editing or additional work (see Addendum D).
- 14 Supervisor informs HoD and Postgraduate Office, in consultation with the student of **an intended date of completion** of studies. In order to be in time for graduation ceremony, all the processes from step one to step twelve should be completed before: 30 April for the September graduation ceremony and 31 October for the April graduation ceremony.
- 15 Supervisor(s) provides a **list of suitable external assessors** to HoD. HoD, in consultation with the supervisors and on approval of DRIC:
 - * selects external assessors, and
 - * final project title, in consultation with the student.
- 16 HoD, in consultation with the supervisor(s) completes Approval of Final Project Title and Appointment of External Assessors and submits form with the relevant CV's to the Faculty Secretariat for submission to the Language Committee for editing of the final project title and submission to the FHDC for approval.
 - If the Application for approval of final title and appointment of external assessors is not approved by the FHDC: Refer back to the relevant HoD for further discussion and improvements.
 - If the Application for approval of final title and appointment of external assessors is approved by the FHDC: Faculty Secretariat sends the final document, typed in the correct format, to the HDC for approval.

17 Appointment of external assessors

External assessors of Master's dissertations and Doctoral theses should have the same qualifications as the supervisors, namely a Doctorate. Highly experienced researchers/specialists with a Master's degree may be considered as assessor for a Master's dissertation provided that at least one of the two assessors have a doctorate.

NOTE: Supervisors and assessors who do not comply with the minimum qualification requirements (doctorate) may only be appointed if the request is supported by a well formulated motivation.

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Academic Administration sends a letter of appointment to the external assessors.

Academic Administration submits the relevant documents to the TUT Secretariat for submission to the FB for notification and to the Senate for ratification.

Change of assessment panel and/or project title: When a change in the examination panel or the project title occurs, step 15 and 16 is repeated.

- 18 Students submit **ring bound soft cover copy of** dissertation / thesis to supervisor(s). If supervisor(s) is satisfied (appropriate form signed by supervisors and the HoD), student will prepare final inspection copy and supervisor(s) will submit to Faculty Secretariat for quality check (done by a senior staff member or staff members of the Faculty appointed by the FHDC). If a student is of the opinion that he/she is ready to hand in but is being held back by a supervisor, for whatever reason, such a student may submit an appeal to the Executive Dean of the Faculty to resolve the issue.

Note: In case of a dispute, refer to the Executive Dean of the relevant faculty.

- 19 On return of comments, the supervisor(s) discusses corrections with the student. Student prepares **final assessment copies** and submits the requested soft bound copies to the supervisor (one copy for each member of the assessment panel plus one additional copy).
- 20 Supervisor submits all the copies for the supervisors and the external assessors to Academic Administration, which will then forward these by courier. The assessment panel (including the supervisors) are expected to return their recommendations, within no more than six weeks to the Postgraduate Office. Academic Administration provides copies of all the supervisors' and the external assessors' reports (without their names) to the supervisor for discussion with the student.

Note: In cases where the lowest and the highest mark allocated by the assessors (internal or external) of a dissertation differ by more than 15%, an assessment panel, consisting of the supervisor(s) and the external assessors have to be convened under the chairmanship of the Executive Dean of the relevant Faculty. This panel must then make a recommendation to the FHDC with regard to the final mark to be awarded. If consensus cannot be reached, a third external assessor must be appointed who's mark will then be counted in stead of the mark that is not within the 15% range. This rule is only applicable to master's degrees. Marks are not allocated for Doctoral theses but in cases where one or more of the assessors differ on the result (pass or fail), the Assessment Panel will deal with the matter during the defence of the thesis.

- 21 In case of a Doctorate, the Executive Dean, in consultation with the HoD the supervisor(s) and the external assessors should arrange a **defence of thesis** meeting in accordance with the guidelines provided in Addendum C.

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- 22 **Correction and changes** to be made by the student, in consultation with the supervisor(s). In the case of Doctorates, changes as agreed by the student and the members of the panel, will be made after the defence.
- 23 Supervisor will submit a copy of the final dissertation / thesis to Academic Administration for final quality check. Particular attention must be given to the content of the title page (layout, correct title, date, names of degree, Department and supervisors)
- 24 If in order, the student should submit a disk / CD and **five hardcover copies** (legal deposit copies) of the bound thesis or dissertation and a “Completion of Studies” form to the supervisor. For a Master’s degree, the manuscript of at least one article (*), ready for submission for publication in a peer reviewed journal (preferably accredited), must be handed in as part of the requirements of the degree (see Addendum D). For a Doctorate two articles (*), should already have been submitted for publication in peer reviewed journals (preferably accredited). Written proof that the journal has received the articles must be handed in as part of the requirements of the degree.

(*) Faculty Boards may add additional requirements but must submit these to HDC and Senate for approval.

- 25 Supervisor compiles a summary of supervisors’ and external assessors’ reports according to the prescribed format and submits it to the HoD for submission to the Faculty Secretariat. This report must be signed by the supervisor **and** by the HoD.
- 26 The Faculty Secretariat submits the assessors report with all the supporting documents (including at least one copy of the final thesis/dissertation) to the FHDC.
- When not approved: Referred back to the HoD and supervisor with recommendations.
 - When approved: The Faculty Secretariat sends the final document, typed in the correct format, to Academic Administration for processing.

Academic Administration submits the relevant documents (including at least one copy of the final dissertation/thesis) to TUT Secretariat for submission to the HDC for approval

- When not approved: Referred back to the FHDC with recommendations.
- When approved: The TUT Secretariat sends the final document, typed in the correct format, to the Senate for ratification and the FB for notification

Postgraduate Office enters mark on ITS system and the student’s academic report is printed.

Academic record and cover letter are mailed to student.

Academic Administration informs the Graduation Ceremonies office that the student meets all the requirements for the qualification to be formally awarded.

NOTE: Date noted on the degree certificate will be the date when the results have been ratified by the Senate

27 Graduation

- Academic Administration sends a letter with the student's mark, date of issue, names of supervisors and the final title to the Graduation Ceremonies office. For doctorates, an abbreviated CV of the candidate and a brief description (not an abstract) of the merit and contribution of the thesis (150 – 200 words, provided by the Faculty Secretariat), based on the results of the research must also be included.
- Graduation Ceremonies office invites students to ceremony. Academic Administration receives hard-cover copies. Hard-cover copies and cover letter are sent to:
 - Library Services (2).
 - Supervisor (1)
 - Co-supervisor (1)
 - Executive Dean's Office (1)
- An electronic copy is submitted to Library Services.

28 Extension of study period

Students who fail to complete their studies within the prescribed maximum period, have to apply in writing, directly **before the expiry** of the maximum duration to be allowed to continue their studies for an additional period of time (usually one year)..

- Head of department, in consultation with the supervisor(s), decides on further studies and sets conditions where applicable.
- Executive Dean, in consultation with HoD and supervisor, approves such further registration. Letter of confirmation sent to student, Academic Administration and for notification to the FHDC.
- Academic Administration informs Finances of approval.
- Student registers, subject to certain conditions.
- The maximum period of study for a research master's degree is **three** years and that for a Doctorate is **five** years.

29 Interruption of studies

Registration as a student is valid for one academic year only. If a student fails to register for the subsequent academic year, he or she has to re-apply for admission, submit a new protocol (unless the FHDC is of opinion that the original protocol is still relevant and applicable), register again and pay the full class fee.

30 Number of students per supervisor

It is not the intention of the University to be too prescriptive on the maximum number of postgraduate students that may be supervised by one supervisor. There are many factors that should be considered in order to determine the ideal number of students that can be supervised by an individual supervisor. A few of these are listed below:

- The field of study
- Type of student (full or part-time)
- Ability of students – level of support individual students requires
- “Success and /or achievement” with own research
- Track record as supervisor
- Level or appointment (Professor, Associate Professor, Senior Lecturer, etc)
- Workload (other teaching and administrative responsibilities) of supervisor
- Number of students who want to study post graduate
- TUT strategy to increase post graduate students
- Level (Masters or Doctorate) of students
- Nature of the particular project (research)
- Involvement of another supervisor or co-supervisor
- Involvement of Post-Doc students to assist the supervisor
- Involvement of other Doctoral students to assist the supervisor with his/he Master’s students
- Availability of other supervisors in a particular department

However, a guideline should be set to assist Heads of Department to ensure that supervisors are not overloaded with a subsequent drop in the quality of the supervision. On the other hand it is also important to ensure that a “low” ratio will not be exploited to be used to turn away potential students from TUT. A guideline needs to be discussed by each of the faculties of the University in order to establish faculty specific guidelines.

It should also be noted that TUT is not a fully developed University but should be seen as a developing University. For this reason it is important that less experienced staff be included in study panels with experienced supervisors in order to develop the supervisory skills of all staff.

31 Assessment of supervisors

Supervisors of postgraduate students should be regularly assessed and the following topics may be included for the assessment:

- Time students spend to complete their studies under his/her supervision
- Reports from external assessors
- Other outputs such as publications and conference presentations by their students based on their theses/dissertations
- “In house” seminars for his/her students

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- Evaluation by students
- Evaluation by peers

A guideline needs to be developed by each of the Faculty Higher Degree Committees of the University in order to establish faculty specific guidelines.

Addendum B

LIST OF FORMS

Number of Form	Description
PGS001	Application for admission to postgraduate studies.
PGS002	Application for granting of equivalence/status.
PGS003	Application for approval of research field and appointment of study panel.
PGS004	Registration form for postgraduate studies.
PGS005	Application for approval of re-registration.
PGS006	Evaluation of research project and confirmation of study panel by Departmental Research and Innovation Committee (DRIC).
PGS007	Application for approval of provisional project title and confirmation of study panel, plus Amendment of study panel.
PGS008	Confirmation that dissertation / thesis is ready for assessment.
PGS009	Approval of final project title and appointment of external assessors; plus Amendment of project title; plus Amendment of examination panel.
PGS010	Allocation of marks by supervisors .
PGS011	Allocation of marks by external assessors .
PGS012	Claim: Foreign / South African Assessors Banking Details.
PGS013	Completion of studies - Affidavit by student.
PGS014	Summary of Assessors' reports (Master's)
PGS015	Summary of Assessors' reports (Doctorates)
PGS016	Confirmation of final results.

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(FB&S)-(PGS002)	Granting of equivalence/status.
(FB&S)-PGS003)	Approval study field&study panel.
(FB&S)-(PGS007)	Provisional title&confirmation of study panel
(FB&S)-(PGS007)	Study panel amendment
(FB&S)-(PGS009)	External assessment panel amendment
(FB&S)-(PGS009)	Final project title & external assessors
(FB&S)-(PGS009)	Final project title amendment.

Addendum C

DEFENCE OF A THESIS (DOCTORAL DEGREES ONLY)

1. INTRODUCTION

The practice of a “**defence of thesis**” or an “oral assessment” is widely applied by universities in South Africa and in many other countries. The practice varies from a very formal public examination [or hearing] to a more informal discussion about certain aspects of the thesis. This defence is normally associated with a PhD thesis and not so much with a master’s dissertation.

The emphasis should be placed on the ability of students to “defend” their research results and conclusions rather than just presenting them in the form of a thesis. This is done by making it compulsory for students to not only publish their work but also to present their research results at public gatherings (conferences, symposia, etc).

The defence should be seen as a “validation exercise” aimed at adding value to both the quality and standard of the thesis and to the general development of the candidate as a mature professional. The discussion at the meeting should be limited to issues raised by the assessors of the thesis.

The defence should not be confused with the purpose of a colloquium:

A colloquium (TUT) is held when the student completed the research and is ready to write the dissertation or thesis. This is a public event for the student to present his/her research results and preliminary findings. Several “experts”, other academics and postgraduate students are invited.

The defence should also not be confused with the presentation of results (oral or by poster) at conferences, symposia or workshops.

Marks are not allocated for a Doctoral thesis but in cases where one or more of the assessors differ on the result (pass or fail), the Assessment Panel will deal with the matter during the defence of the thesis.

2. THE PROCESS

2.1 Composition of the “assessment panel”

The assessment panel should be appointed by the Executive Dean of the Faculty, in collaboration with the HoD. The panel will consist of an independent chairperson, the supervisor(s), at least one but preferably all external assessors, the Executive Dean (Ex Officio) and the Head of Department (if not already included). If one or more of the external assessors are living outside South Africa, a video conference should be arranged to save cost and to

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ensure that all external assessors can take part in the meeting. The Executive Dean, after consultation with the Head of Department and the supervisors may invite additional persons, either as observers or as members of the committee, to the meeting.

The chairperson of the panel, usually the Executive dean or a person who is appointed by the Executive Dean, must preferably be a professor but must be an experienced research supervisor in possession of a doctorate.

2.2 Terms of reference of the assessment panel

During the meeting, the panel and the candidate will be allowed to discuss any aspects related to the thesis. The candidate must be provided with an opportunity to defend any statements and/or findings that might have been questioned by the external assessors. The candidate will also be allowed to question any changes suggested by the external assessors or by the supervisors.

The panel should establish the following

- That the thesis is the candidate's own work and has the candidate demonstrated his/her ability to do independent research?
- Does the thesis make a substantial contribution to knowledge and/or provide substantial evidence of original work?
- Does the candidate show a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of matters relating to the thesis?
- Does the candidate show a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of background studies to the subject of the thesis?
- Where the candidate was part of a collaborative group, did the thesis and/or the defence meeting reveal the unique contribution of the candidate?

The Panel may make ONE of the following recommendations.

- The degree be awarded without any further changes
- The degree be awarded subject to minor corrections and/or amendments being made to the final copies of the thesis to the satisfaction of the panel
- The candidate is permitted to resubmit the entire thesis and be re-examined on one further occasion
- The degree will not be awarded and the candidate may not be permitted to be re-examined

The panel will make its recommendations (in writing, signed by all members) to the Faculty Higher Degrees Committee with regards to the final result of a candidate. This report, attached to the "Summary of Assessors Report", copies of at least two papers with proof of their acceptance for publication in a peer reviewed journal, and the five hardcover copies of the bound thesis, must be submitted to the Faculty Higher Degrees Committee for approval of the result. A copy of the thesis should be available for inspection by members of the

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Faculty Higher Degrees Committee at least one week prior to the meeting of the Executive Committee. If the Faculty Higher Degrees Committee is satisfied that the candidate meets all the requirements for the degree to be awarded, a recommendation will be forwarded to the Higher Degrees Committee for their approval.

The panel should aim to add value to both the thesis and to the development of the student.

The submission of a thesis normally represents only a partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree. The panel should not only verify that the candidate has fulfilled all the requirements for the degree for which he or she is being assessed (other requirements: draft publication, colloquium, oral and/or written reports as required by the supervisors, presentations at seminars and/or symposia, etc) but also give direction with regard to dissemination/implementation of the findings.

2.3 Timeframe

This “defence” should take place after completion of the official assessment process and the suggested corrections/changes have been received and studied by the supervisor(s) and the student. In cases where the candidate and/or the supervisors do not agree with some of the changes suggested by the assessors, these will also be discussed at the defence. After the defence, changes as agreed to must be made before a soft bound copy is submitted for the final inspection.

PASS REQUIREMENTS OF MASTER'S DEGREES AND DOCTORATES

1. RESEARCH BASED MASTER'S DEGREES:

In order to be awarded a research based master's degree, a student has to comply with the following requirements:

- 1.1 A colloquium.
- 1.2 A draft of at least one paper, ready for submission for publication in a peer reviewed journal, preferably accredited (to be handed in with the final dissertation).
- 1.3 A dissertation to be assessed by supervisor(s) and two external assessors.

The final mark of a dissertation is to be calculated as the average of the marks awarded by each of the external assessors and by the supervisor (internal assessor). In cases where more than one supervisor was appointed, their marks would be averaged to ensure that the **external** assessor's marks count **67%** of the final mark and that the mark allocated by the **supervisors** will never count more than **33% or one third** of the final mark. This mark will be used to determine the final result as follows:

Mark as %	Result
0 – 49	Fail
50 – 74	Pass
75 – 100	Pass (<i>cum laude</i>)

2. STRUCTURED MASTER'S DEGREES:

In order for a student to pass a mini-dissertation, he or she would have to meet the following requirements:

- 2.1 A colloquium.
- 2.2 A draft paper to be submitted for publication.
- 2.3 A mini dissertation to be examined by one or more supervisors and **one** external assessor.

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The final mark for a mini-dissertation is to be calculated as an average of the marks awarded by the one external assessor and the supervisor. In cases where more than one supervisor was appointed, their marks would be averaged to ensure that the external assessor's mark count 50% of the final mark.

In order to be awarded a structured master's degree, a candidate has to pass all the relevant subjects AND obtain a pass mark of at least 50% for the mini-dissertation. Candidates who obtain an overall average mark of at least 75% for all the components of the degree (mini-dissertation and subjects) will be awarded the degree with distinction (*cum laude*).

3. GENERAL COMMENTS ON MASTER'S DEGREES

In cases where the lowest and the highest mark allocated by the assessors (including all internal and all external assessors) differ by more than 15%, the assessment panel, consisting of the supervisor(s) and the external assessors have to be convened under the chairmanship of the Executive Dean of the relevant Faculty. This panel must then make a recommendation to the Faculty Higher Degrees Committee with regard to the final mark to be awarded. If consensus cannot be reached, an additional external assessor must be appointed whose mark will then be used instead of the mark that is not within the 15% range.

Persons employed by the same company as the student may not be appointed as external assessors. Full-time staff members of the University may only be used as External Assessors in exceptional cases provided that such staff member had no involvement at all in the project.

4. DOCTORATES

In order to be awarded a doctorate, a student has to comply with the following requirements:

- 4.1 A colloquium.
- 4.2 Copies of at least two papers that have already been submitted for publication in an accredited or peer reviewed journal (proof that the journal has received these must be handed in with the copies of the final version or legal deposit copy of the thesis). (**Note:** Faculties may add own requirements but these must be submitted to Senate for approval. All requirements must be clearly stated in the Prospectus of each Faculty)
- 4.3 A thesis to be assessed by supervisor(s) and two external assessors.
- 4.4 A successful defence of the thesis.

TSHWANE UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY HIGHER DEGREES COMMITTEE (HDC)

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Senate of the University, as statutory committee, is the highest decision making body for all academic matters. The efficient management of the postgraduate policy and procedures is one of the key responsibilities of Senate and although these are managed by various structures within the University, Senate delegates part of its responsibilities to a Higher Degrees Committee (HDC). The Higher Degrees Committee is assisted on Faculty level by Faculty Higher Degrees Committees (FHDC).

The main purpose of these two committees is to ensure that sound uniform practices are established within the various Faculties in order to ensure that the quality of all postgraduate degrees are beyond question and that the processes are efficient and effective.

1. REPORTING LINE

- 1.1 The Higher Degrees Committee (HDC) is a subcommittee of the Senate and reports to the Senate.
- 1.2 The Faculty Higher Degrees Committee (FHDC) is a subcommittee of the Higher Degrees Committee and reports to the Higher Degrees Committee.
- 1.3 The FHDC is also a subcommittee of the Faculty Boards within faculties and serves in an advisory capacity with respect to postgraduate studies.
- 1.4 Departmental Research Committees (DRIC) are also subcommittees of the FHDC with respect to all postgraduate studies.

The reporting lines of the above committees are indicated in the attached figure.

2. FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The function and responsibilities of the HDC and the FHDC are to evaluate, consider and approve all applications and to monitor matters related to postgraduate studies at TUT. In most cases, the FHDC consider submissions from the departments and will submit their recommendation to the HDC for approval. Senate will ratify all such approvals. As a standing subcommittee of Senate, Senate delegates all its powers related to postgraduate studies to the HDC and the FHDC is appointed as a subcommittee of the HDC within each faculty. Before any degrees can be awarded, the final results of a dissertation or thesis must be approved by the HDC, on recommendation of the FHDC, and ratified by the

Senate. Table 1 indicates the responsibilities of the different committees with respect to postgraduate studies.

2.1 The main function and responsibilities of the FHDC include the following:

- Approval of the study, provisional study panel and the provisional field of study.
- Approval of study panel (supervisors) and project proposals of postgraduate students.
- Approval of external assessors for the assessment of postgraduate dissertations and theses.
- Approval of final results of assessors and assessment panels. This includes considering any recommendations, changes, resolution of conflict and appointment of additional assessors where required.
- Arranging a defence of thesis meeting for Doctorate students to defend their theses in accordance with the policy.
- Advise Faculty Boards on the development and implementation and improvement of policies related to postgraduate studies at TUT.
- Report to the Faculty Boards on matters related to postgraduate studies.
- Nominating a member (and alternative) from the FHDC membership to serve on the HDC.
- Monitor and manage standards and quality of postgraduate studies in the Faculty.
- Monitor and manage progress of postgraduate students.
- Consideration of Ethical issues related to higher degrees.
- Advise Faculties on strategies related to recruitment and retention of PG students.
- Receive progress reports from supervisors and use these to monitor progress of PG students. Appropriate action needs to be taken where required.
- Consider appeal cases of students who may be of the opinion that they have not been given fair treatment.

2.2 The main function and responsibilities of the HDC will include the following:

- Approval of study panel (supervisors) and project proposals of postgraduate students.
- Approval of external assessors for the assessment of postgraduate dissertations and theses.
- Approval of final results of assessors and assessment panels. This includes considering any recommendations, changes, resolution of conflict and appointment of additional assessors where required.
- Advise Senate on the development and implementation and improvement of policies related to postgraduate studies at TUT.
- Report to Senate on matters related to postgraduate studies.
- Monitor and manage standards and quality of postgraduate studies.

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- Consideration of Ethical issues related to higher degrees.
- Advise Faculties and Senate on strategies related to recruitment and retention of PG students.
- Consider appeal cases of students who may be of the opinion that they have not been given fair treatment.

3. MEMBERSHIP

As fundamental principle the membership of higher degrees committees will be limited to experienced researchers. Each of the substantive members must have an alternate member to ensure continuity.

3.1 Higher Degrees Committee (HDC)

- DVC (RIP) as Chairperson
- DVC (TLT)
- Executive Deans or their representatives as nominated by the FHDC
- Director RIP or his/her representative
- Two members of Senate (not Deans), nominated by Senate

Non voting members of the HDC:

- Registrar or his/her representative
- The Director Quality Promotion or his/her representative
- Representative of the Postgraduate Forum (PGF)
- The committee has the right to co-opt additional member to assist it where needed.

By invitation as observers:

- Relevant supervisors and/or Heads of Department

3.2 Faculty Higher Degrees Committee

- Executive Dean as Chairperson
- Associate Dean where applicable
- 2 Professors (nominated by the EXCO of the Faculty for approval by the Faculty Board)
- 2 Heads of Department of the Faculty (nominated by the EXCO of the Faculty for approval by the Faculty Board)
- Any additional members as required by the FHDC, for approval by the Faculty Board.

Non voting members:

- Research Officer (s) of the faculty
- The Assistant Registrar designated for the specific faculty
- The supervisor and HoD of any particular student (they must be invited to the meeting when the final results of such a student is under discussion and may be invited when considering project proposals)
- Representative of the Faculty Postgraduate Forum (FPGF)

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In cases where a particular faculty does not have two professors, a member with a Doctorate who has successfully supervised postgraduate students should be appointed but all members of this committee (excluding the Executive Dean and Associate Dean) should be members of the DRIC to ensure good continuity. Members are to be appointed to serve on the committee for a period of two years

4. SECRETARIATE

The Secretariat of TUT will provide secretarial support for the HDC and the Office of the Executive Dean shall be responsible for the FHDC. It will be the responsibility of the secretariat to:

- Compile and distribute the agenda in collaboration with the Chairperson
- Notify all members of the time, date and venue of the meeting
- Record and keep the minutes of all meetings of the committee
- Notify all structures and/or persons on recommendations and/or decisions made by the committee
- Keep a record of all decisions and/or decisions made by the committee

Agendas will close at least one week before the date of the meeting and documents to be discussed at the meeting should reach the secretariat by no later than one week before the meeting. Where possible, all documentation should be provided in electronic format accompanied by a cover page and all such documentation, together with the agenda, should reach all members at least four working days before the meeting.

5. QUORUM

A quorum shall consist of 50% plus one of the voting members of the committee. The Chairperson shall have a casting vote in case of a deadlock.

6. MEETINGS

Both the FHDC and the HDC shall meet once a month and particular attention must be given to dates of graduation ceremonies to ensure that candidates who qualify for the graduation be considered in time for the ceremony.

TABLE 1: Delegated decision making responsibilities of the different committees with respect to postgraduate studies.

COMMITTEE	Provisional Study Panel	Final Project Proposal	Assessors	Final Results
Department	Recommend		Recommend	Recommend
DRIC	-	Recommend	-	-
FHDC	Approve	Recommend	Recommend	Recommend
Faculty Board	Ratify	Notice	Notice	Notice
HDC	Notice	Approve	Approve	Approve
SENATE	-	Ratify	Ratify	Ratify

REMARKS:

- The provisional study panel and provisional field of study is approved by the FHDC in order to get the student going with a provisional approved panel until a final project proposal is ready. The final panel is then compiled for approval by all relevant committees.
- For approval of final results, it is required of the study panel to evaluate the reports from the external assessors and then submit their recommendation to the FHDC.
- For Doctoral students, the FHDC will arrange the Defence of Thesis meeting. The recommendations of this committee will then be included in the submission with a recommendation to the HDC.
- Degrees can only be awarded once the HDC has approved the recommendations of the FHDC and the Senate has ratified the decision. Faculty Boards will take note of these decisions that were delegated to the HDC and the FHDC.

Addendum F

UPGRADE OF MASTER'S DEGREES TO DOCTORAL DEGREES

In cases where the supervisor(s) of a master's degree student is of the opinion that the research work done by a Master's degree student is of such a standard, quality and volume that it merits an upgrading to doctoral status, an upgrade can be considered. In such cases, two possible options would be possible:

1. OPTION A

This option is followed when an upgrade is considered while the student is still busy with his/her research and the supervisors are of the opinion that the work in progress is of such standard, quality and volume that it will merit an upgrade to doctoral status.

Procedure to be followed:

- 2.1 The student must be registered for a minimum period of 1 year (project proposal should have been approved by the relevant committees) and have completed a substantial portion of his/her project.
- 2.2 The supervisor(s) must be convinced that the project is of doctoral standard, and at least one peer review accredited journal article has already been accepted for publication.
- 2.3 The supervisor(s) make a fully motivated submission to the DRIC.
- 2.4 If the DRIC agrees with the supervisors, the Chairperson of the DRIC must request the FHDC to appoint two independent internal reviewers for the project.
- 2.5 If the FHDC deem the research project as proposed worthy of a doctoral degree (after evaluating the two internal reviewer's reports), the FHDC must submit a recommendation to the HDC, with all the supporting documents, that the degree be upgraded from a master's dissertation to a doctoral thesis.
- 2.6 If the HDC committee approves the upgrade, the student is informed about the decision and his/her registration is converted to a Doctorate.
- 2.7 On completion of the research project, the same process is followed as for any other doctoral student. If the student's thesis fails the assessment, no degree will be awarded.

2. OPTION B

This option is followed when an upgrade is considered during the write-up phase of the dissertation or when it is ready for assessment. In this case, output will be the criteria to be considered, based upon the findings of the independent external assessors.

Procedure to be followed:

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- 2.1 The student must be registered for a Master's degree and must complete his/her research work.
- 2.2 If , during the write-up phase (after the colloquium), the supervisor(s) are of the opinion that the work is of doctoral standard, and at least one peer review accredited journal article is published or accepted for publication, a well motivated proposal is submitted to the DRIC to upgrade the dissertation.
- 2.3 If the DRIC agrees with the supervisors, the Chairperson of the DRIC can request the FHDC to appoint two independent internal reviewers of the project.
- 2.4 If the FHDC deem the dissertation worthy of a doctoral degree (after evaluating the two internal reviewer's reports), the FHDC must submit a recommendation to the HDC, with all the supporting documents, that the degree be upgraded from a master's dissertation to a doctoral thesis.
- 2.5 Two independent assessors must be appointed, following the same procedures as for other postgraduate students. A covering letter must, however, be included in their appointment explaining the possible upgrade of the dissertation.
- 2.6 The external assessors assess the work as a dissertation, but also submit and additional detailed report where they comment on the contribution measured against the norms and requirements for a doctoral thesis.
- 2.7 If the external assessors deem the work worthy of a doctoral degree without any additional research work to be done, the FHDC must submit a recommendation to the HDC, with all the supporting documents, that the degree be upgraded from a master's dissertation to a doctoral thesis. If the HDC committee approves the upgrade, the relevant Faculty has to arrange a defence of thesis meeting for the candidate to defend his/her thesis.
- 2.8 If the external examiners are of the opinion that additional work is required, the candidate in consultation with his/her supervisors, may decide to carry out the additional work, or to terminate the project at the master's level.
- 2.9 If the candidate decides to carry out the additional work, the resulting thesis is sent to the same external assessors who made the initial recommendation.
- 2.10 If the candidate fails the doctoral thesis assessment (if the student did not fully implement all the requirements as indicated by the external assessors), a master's degree will still be awarded based on the original report and mark allocated by the external assessors.