



## POLICY

### POSTGRADUATE QUALIFICATIONS

#### Introduction

The Foundation for Professional Development (FPD) is committed to providing postgraduate training that meets market needs through relevant and appropriate course content, presented at the appropriate level and preparation of students for the demand of research. Course content is informed by consultation with experts and various stakeholders in the field of study, educationally designed for maximum benefit in line with FPD's mission to catalyse social change through developing people. FPD promotes the ideal of distinguished scholarship and the provision of credible and innovative research findings that carry international recognition as well as national credibility and legitimacy. These procedures relate to research proposals, research reports of postgraduate diplomas, dissertations and mini-dissertations of Masters degrees.

#### Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a detailed outline of the regulations, structures and procedures in place to ensure quality offering of postgraduate learning programmes.

#### Scope

The Policy applies to:

- All academic and/or research employees in their role as supervisors, lectures and examiners of postgraduate students;
- Heads of Schools;
- Academic Executive;
- Registrar;
- All students registered for Postgraduate qualifications across all schools.

## Terms and definitions

<b>Assessment</b>	Systematic evaluation of a student's ability to demonstrate the achievement of the learning goals intended in a curriculum. <sup>1</sup>
<b>Candidate</b>	A student enrolled in a Postgraduate Master's or Doctoral programme.
<b>Dissertation</b>	A written scientific report on research, which is the requirement for obtaining a research Master's degree. <small>Error! Bookmark not defined.</small>
<b>Foundation for Professional Development Research Ethics Committee (FPD REC)</b>	An independent body comprising members who have the ability to undertake thorough, competent, and timely reviews of research proposals. Please see the <a href="#">FPDREC Terms of Reference</a> here.
<b>Mini dissertation</b>	A written scientific report (or paper) associated with a structured Master's degree (research report supplemented by course work). <small>Error! Bookmark not defined.</small>
<b>Learning Programme</b>	A purposeful and structured learning experiences that lead to a qualification at the end of a set duration. <sup>2</sup>
<b>Prospective student</b>	An applicant who has not yet be admitted to a postgraduate qualification programme.
<b>Qualification</b>	A registered national qualification consisting of a planned combination of learning outcomes which has a defined purpose or purposes, intended to provide qualifying learners with applied competence and a basis for further learning and which has been assessed in terms of exit level outcomes, registered on the NQF and certified and awarded by a recognised body. Formal recognition and certification of learning achievement awarded by an accredited institution. <sup>2</sup>
<b>Research</b>	Work undertaken systematically to increase the store of knowledge, including knowledge of humanity, culture and society, and the use of this knowledge to devise new applications. <sup>3</sup>
<b>Research ethics</b>	Principles and practices that guide ethical conduct of research. These should embody respect for the rights of others who are directly or indirectly affected by the research. The rights of others include rights of privacy and confidentiality, protection from harm, giving informed consent, access to information and due acknowledgement. <sup>4</sup>
<b>Research report</b>	A systematically written document describing a research study and its findings. The report usually contains various sections referring to specific aspects of the research.
<b>Student</b>	An applicant who has been admitted to a learning programme.
<b>Supervisor</b>	A part-time or full-time academic employee appointed to guide and academically assist a postgraduate student with his/her research. <sup>4</sup>
<b>Thesis</b>	An advanced written scientific research product required in fulfilment of a Doctoral degree.

<sup>1</sup> Council on Higher Education. 2004. Criteria for Programme Accreditation. Available at: [http://nr-online.che.ac.za/html\\_documents/CHE\\_accreditation\\_criteria\\_Nov2004.pdf](http://nr-online.che.ac.za/html_documents/CHE_accreditation_criteria_Nov2004.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> National Qualification Authority. 2017. Standard Glossary of Terms. Available at: <https://hr.saga.co.za/glossary/pdf/NQFPedia.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> OECD (2015). Frascati Manual 2015: Guidelines for Collecting and Reporting Data on Research and Experimental Development.

<sup>4</sup> Council on Higher Education. 2005. Good Practice Guide for Quality Management of Research. Available at: <http://www.thutong.doe.gov.za/resourcesdownload.aspx?id=8061>

## Postgraduate programmes

The Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework (HEQSF)<sup>5</sup> comprises of six higher education qualifications (NQF level 5-10). NQF levels 5 to 7 comprise undergraduate qualifications (with the exception of the professional Bachelor's Degree at Level 8) and levels 8 to 10 accommodate postgraduate qualifications. These postgraduate qualification types are:

- Postgraduate Diploma (NQF Level 8)
- Bachelor Honours Degree (NQF Level 8)
- Master's Degree (NQF Level 9)
- Professional Master's Degree (NQF Level 9)
- Doctoral Degree (NQF Level 10)
- Professional Doctorate (NQF Level 10)

### Postgraduate Diploma

The aim of a Postgraduate Diploma is to enable working professionals to achieve advanced reflection and development by means of a systematic survey of current thinking, practice, and research methods in an area of specialisation. The programme may or may not have a research component, depending on its intended purpose.

### Bachelor Honours Degree<sup>5</sup>

The Bachelor Honours Degree aims to prepare students for research-based postgraduate studies by consolidating and deepening a student's expertise in a discipline. Students are required to conduct research under supervision. The research component must at least be worth 30 credits. The qualification may carry recognition with an appropriate Professional or statutory body; however, this depends on the requirements of each individual body.

### Master's Degree<sup>5</sup>

The *general Master's degree* aims to educate and train researchers who can contribute to the development of knowledge at an advanced level. The programme is offered as two variants, namely:

- Master's Degree by dissertation which requires undertaking of a single advanced research project and submission of a dissertation in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the awarding of the qualification.
- Master's Degree by coursework and mini-dissertation which requires high level of theoretical engagement and intellectual independence, and the acceptance of a mini-dissertation (comprising a minimum of 60 credits at NQF level 9).

The *Professional Master's degree* aims to educate and train graduates who can contribute to the development of knowledge at an advanced level and that they are prepared for advanced and specialised professional employment. Professional Master's Degrees may be designed in conjunction with Professional bodies; however, there are exceptions. A Professional Master's Degree requires high level of theoretical engagement and intellectual independence, as well as resolution of complex problems in areas of professional practice and the acceptance of a single research or technical project or a series of smaller projects that comprise at least a quarter of the total credits at NQF level 9.

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<sup>5</sup> South African Department of Education. 2007. The Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework. Available at: [https://nr-online-1.che.ac.za/html\\_documents/6.PUB\\_HEQSF.PDF](https://nr-online-1.che.ac.za/html_documents/6.PUB_HEQSF.PDF)

## Doctoral Degrees<sup>5</sup>

The *general Doctorate* aims to provide qualifying candidates with high level research capability and an opportunity to make a significant and original academic contribution at the frontiers of a discipline or field and must culminate with the acceptance of a thesis. The student must meet the requirements to satisfy peer review and merit publication.

The *Professional Doctorate* aims to provide education and training for a career in the professions and/or industry and is designed around the development of high- level performance and innovation in a professional context. Candidates are required to undertake a combination of coursework and advanced research leading to the submission, assessment and acceptance of a research component comprising an original thesis or another form of research that is matching the nature of the discipline or field and the specific area of enquiry.

## Application and Admission

The application process, admission requirements and selection criteria are available on the FPD website and in [Policy SR1: Student Selection, Admission and Enrolment](#).

The HEQSF allows a Master's student's candidate to be upgraded to a Doctoral programme, provided the candidate has the necessary competence and the "50/50" rule is adhered to. The upgrading request must be recommended by the supervisor to the Academic Executive.

Master's and Doctoral candidates may be required to submit a (draft) article for publication as part of the dissertation phase. Prospective students must be made aware of this prior to registration.

The minimum qualifications for admission to postgraduate studies are set out in the Student Recruitment, selection, admission and enrolment Policy ([Policy SR1 Student Selection, Admission and Enrolment](#)) and described by the HEQSF.

Candidates who apply for admission to Master's degree by dissertation and Doctoral degrees, may submit a title with their admission applications. Candidates who apply for a Master's degree by coursework and mini-dissertation, may be required to submit a title for the mini-dissertation with the application for admission or upon registering for the research module.

The Registrar verifies compliance with the admissions requirements of the qualification. The application is then referred to the relevant School for selection and, in accordance with the provisions of section 37(3) and 4(b) of the Higher Education Act 101 of 1997, recommends approval or rejection to the Academic Committee. The School considers the prospective student's academic record, their academic background, language competence and other factors during the selection process. The title of the dissertation or mini-dissertation is also considered and approved, or amendments to the title are requested.

The Head of School informs the Registrar of the outcome of the selection process as well as the reasons for non-acceptance.

An appeal against non-admission on academic grounds may be addressed to the Registrar who will refer it to the Academic Committee to reconsider. The decision of the Academic Committee is final.

## Registration

A candidate whose application for a Postgraduate Diploma or Bachelor Honours degree has been approved for admission may register for all modules on the programme.

A candidate whose application for a Master's degree by dissertation or a doctoral degree has been approved for admission may register for the research proposal module.

A candidate whose application for a Master's degree by coursework (and mini-dissertation) has been approved for admission may register for the coursework modules that are a pre-requisite for the research component as well as the research proposal module.

A candidate whose application for a Doctoral degree has been approved for admission may register for all modules.

## Appointment of Supervisor and Co-supervisor

Supervisors of candidates doing Master's dissertations must hold at least an equivalent (Master's) qualification, and must have a research record that is deemed acceptable by the Institution for the appointment. In exceptional circumstances, the Academic Executive may approve the appointment of a supervisor with specific expertise but without the stipulated academic qualification or research record. In the case of inexperienced or new supervisors, joint supervision is advisable and the new supervisor will be required to complete the FPD short learning programme on Postgraduate Research Supervision or a similar programme.

Supervisors of candidates completing Doctoral degrees must hold a Doctoral degree and must have a research record that is deemed acceptable by the Institution for the appointment. In exceptional circumstances, the Academic Executive may approve the appointment of a supervisor with specific expertise but without the stipulated academic qualification or research record. In the case of inexperienced or new supervisors, joint supervision is advisable and the new supervisor will be required to complete the FPD short learning programme on Postgraduate Research Supervision or a similar programme.

After registration has been finalised, both the candidate and their supervisor sign a contract setting out their respective roles regarding the proposed research.

Supervisors external to FPD may be appointed to increase supervision capacity. Their remuneration and conditions of employment are determined by the relevant HR structures.

The following criteria are taken into account when appointing external supervisors: academic qualification, expertise in the field and supervisory experience at the level of the qualification they will be required to supervise.

A co-supervisor or panel of supervisors may be appointed. Co-supervisors or panel members should be experts in an aspect of the field of the proposed dissertation. They provide academic support and expertise in co-operation with the supervisor.

In exceptional circumstances a supervisor or candidate may address a duly motivated request to the Academic Executive for the appointment of a co-supervisor, or for the replacement of the supervisor by another supervisor.

## The Student-supervisor relationship

### Student Responsibilities and Legitimate Supervisor Expectations:

The student is responsible for exercising the following responsibilities diligently and sincerely and, where appropriate, to consult with his/her supervisor/s in order to give effect to these responsibilities. Conversely, the supervisor/s may legitimately expect students to exercise these responsibilities at all times.

- Plan and implement the agreed research programme or project;
- Submit a schedule for the submission
- Submit monthly progress reports
- Successfully complete all the academic outputs of the study programme;
- Find/source appropriate literature and obtain information from literature;
- Write the research proposal in the time stipulated;
- Prepare all documents required for obtaining ethics clearance, if applicable;
- Assist in a limited manner in the drafting of funding applications;
- Plan work schedules;
- Engage in any required fieldwork or data gathering, laboratory experimentation, data processing and statistical analyses;
- Write and proofread his/her research report, dissertation or thesis, including, but not limited to, obtaining professional assistance with the linguistic editing of the dissertation or thesis;
- Attend to any amendments or revisions of the dissertation or thesis as required by the supervisor/s or internal or external assessors, and assume responsibility for the production of the final bound hard and electronic copies;
- Make regular appointments with the supervisor/s and inform him/her in time if any administrative or academic difficulties are experienced in the study programme in order for the supervisor/s to advise in respect of timely corrective action;
- Participate in research projects and programmes as determined by the supervisors, including attendance of symposia, seminars and conferences;
- If necessary, purchase items that may be required to complete the production of the dissertation or thesis;
- In the case of research post-graduate students, produce at least one manuscript of a research paper in a format that, by the time the Assessment Sub-Committee considers the assessment results, is ready for submission to an accredited research journal;
- Adhere at all times to all general academic ethics with regard to academic integrity and plagiarism, and ethics requirements relating to the research work; and
- Renew his/her annual registration with the Foundation for Professional Development at the stipulated times.

**Supervisor Responsibilities and Legitimate Student Expectations:**

All supervisors are responsible for exercising the following responsibilities diligently and sincerely. Conversely, the student may legitimately expect the supervisors to exercise these responsibilities at all times.

- Clarify the respective roles of the supervisor and co-supervisor(s) (if appointed), and communicate these clearly to the student;
- Administer and manage matters associated with the student's studies in accordance with the regulations of the Foundation for Professional Development;
- Cooperate with each other and with the Head of School and/or Academic Executive or other responsible FPD official, to ensure as far as reasonably possible that the student is provided with the basic infrastructure and necessary resources to undertake the research; Co-operate with each other and with the Head of School and/or Academic Executive, to assist with the arrangements for discussions or seminars which the student may present;
- Ensure that the Programme Coordinator and relevant committees are furnished with all relevant documentation at the appropriate time;
- Provide academic guidance to the student to ensure the development of research skills and mastery of the research discipline and the field of specialisation, and that these competencies are demonstrated in the relevant dissertation or thesis;
- Facilitate the student's access to necessary research resources, such as the library, laboratories and equipment, access to chemicals and consumables, without diminishing the student's duty to take responsibility for his/her own research. This includes purchasing items that may be required to complete the production of the dissertation or thesis;
- Introduce the student to the School in order to, involve him/her in academic activities appropriate to the field of expertise where possible and practical;
- Meet with the student regularly to provide guidance, monitor progress and agreed upon timeframes, and recommend corrective measures, if necessary;
- Give feedback to the student regarding work submitted within 4 calendar weeks.
- Keep a written record of progress and output and provide timely feedback, bearing in mind his/her other formal FPD responsibilities;
- Provide progress reports as required by the FPD and its research and/or postgraduate study structures, or by external agencies, where required;
- Assess the research report, dissertation or thesis (if appointed as an assessor), and oversee any changes recommended by the assessors and those stipulated by the appropriate Faculty or FPD structure;
- Liaise regularly with each other in order to clarify, on an ongoing basis, roles and responsibilities with regard to academic supervision;
- Adhere at all times to all general academic ethics with regard to academic integrity and plagiarism, and the ethics requirements of research work; and
- Encourage the student to seek external financial support for his/her studies.

**Head of School specific responsibilities**

The Head of School manages the student-supervisor relationship in accordance with the provisions contained in this Policy, the [Student Grievance Policy \(SR3\)](#), the [Student Support Policy \(SR5\)](#), the [Language Policy \(SR2\)](#), the [Student Disability Policy \(SR4\)](#), the [Student Selection, Admission and Enrolment Policy \(SR1\)](#) and the School's rules and regulations as determined and approved by Academic Committee and contained in the Institution Rules and Regulations.

## Research Proposals

Candidates should be guided in submitting drafts of the research proposal to their supervisors and be given the opportunity to rework drafts after proper feedback from the supervisor. When the supervisor is satisfied with the research proposal, the relevant School will evaluate same. The Head of School will inform the supervisor and student of the outcome of the evaluation of the research proposal.

If the research proposal is not accepted within 6 months from admission, the candidate may not re-register for a period of 1 year with the same School.

A candidate who is dissatisfied with the result of their research proposal module, may appeal the decision, in writing, to the Academic Executive within 30 (thirty) days of receiving the written confirmation of their result. The Academic Executive will refer the matter for investigation to the Academic Committee who will inform the Academic Executive of the outcome of the investigation within 30 (thirty) days of the date of referral. The matter may be referred to an external academic, whereafter the Academic Executive notifies the Registrar of the outcome, who will inform the candidate.

Ethical clearance must be obtained before the candidate commences data-gathering. All research involving human participants and animals will have to obtain ethical clearance from a research ethics committee registered with the National Health Research Ethics Council. Research designs that involve minimal risk to human participants may obtain ethical approval from the FPDREC.

## Research Ethics Committee

FPD's Research Ethics Committee (FPDREC) is an independent body comprising members who have the ability to undertake thorough, competent, and timely reviews of research proposals. In the execution of its responsibilities in evaluating the ethics of research protocols, FPDREC is guided by the relevant South African law, ethics guidelines, professional standards, international standards and guidelines and codes of practice:

- FPDREC promotes ethical research and strives for excellence in research that can withstand public scrutiny.
- FPDREC espouses the constitutional values of human dignity, equality, social justice and fairness.
- FPDREC affirms the constitutional principles of academic freedom and freedom of scientific research.

Further details on the general guidelines for ethical research are provided in the FPDREC's [Standard Operating Procedures \(SOP\)](#), [Terms of Reference \(ToR\)](#) and [Guidelines for Research Ethics Evaluation](#).

## Procedure for Research Ethics Review

### Submissions required for ethics review

A copy of the following must be submitted electronically, in English, to the FPDREC:

- a. Complete research proposal. The proposal submitted for scientific or technical review and for ethics review must be the same..
- b. Completed [Summary Sheet](#).
- c. Documents related to the proposal.

The [Summary Sheet](#) must contain the following information:

- a. Researchers' names, affiliations, addresses and contact numbers.
- b. Organisation(s) or institution(s) involved in the study.
- c. Sponsors or funders.
- d. Other pertinent information such as conflict of interest. There is a conflict of interest if the researcher has an interest in the research that may influence their ability to undertake the research in a scientific, unbiased and ethical manner.

The proposal-related documents must include the following:

- a. Participant information sheet (if applicable).
- b. Description of the process for obtaining informed consent.
- c. Informed consent form, both in English and in the language of the potential participants in layman's terms to be easily understood.
- d. Description and/or amounts of compensation including reimbursements, gifts or services to be provided to participants (if applicable)
- e. Description for arrangement for indemnity (if applicable)
- f. Description of any financial costs to participants (if applicable)
- g. Description of provision of insurance coverage to participants (if applicable)
- h. Description of steps to take in case of adverse event or when injury or harm is experienced by the participants attribute to their participation in the study.
- i. Statement agreeing to comply with ethical principles set out in the FPDREC SOP and Guidelines for Research Ethics Evaluation.
- j. Disclosure of any previous ethics review action by other ethics review bodies (if applicable)
- k. Research instruments such as questionnaires, interview guides and similar documents
- l. Research budget
- m. Project agreement (e.g. MOA)
- n. Curriculum Vitae of principal investigators
- o. Letter(s) of permission from relevant bodies (if applicable)

### Steps for reviewing proposals by the REC

- 1) Proposals for review must reach REC members at least a week in advance of REC meetings, together with other relevant documents (minutes, agenda etc).
- 2) After reviewing the proposal and related documents, members must make a summary of the proposal and documents using the approved Assessment Form/Checklist.
- 3) The decision must be in writing on the appropriate page of the Assessment Form/Checklist. If the decision is 'disapproved' the reasons for the disapproval must be in writing. If the decision is 'modify', the items for revision must be clearly indicated in the Assessment Form/Checklist.
- 4) Reviewers should provide researchers with as many suggestions possible for meeting the ethical requirements for the research, especially if the research is deemed to be significantly beneficial to society or has strong social justice merits. However, the justice merit of the research cannot solely be used to approve an ethically defective proposal.
- 5) The members' views are discussed at the meeting and one of the following decisions are made: Approved; Requires modification; Requires clarification; Disapproved, with reasons; or, Rejected.
- 6) Any member can request the chair to invite the investigators and/or funders to elaborate or explain certain aspects of the proposal.
- 7) The secretary must communicate the decision of the FPDREC to the applicant in writing. This must include a clear explanation if the decision is negative or if revisions are required.
- 8) Research which involves external institutions must be reviewed and acted on by the student's relevant REC(s).

## **Relationship between researchers and participants**

Participants should be seen as indispensable and worthy partners in research. Researchers should respect and protect the rights and interests of participants at every stage and level of research.

The risks and benefits of the research to the prospective participants should be fully considered. Research that could lead to unnecessary physical, social and/or psychological harm should not be undertaken. Researchers should identify potential risks to participants and make provision to avoid them. When risks form part of the conduct of the study, efforts should be made for mitigation or protection.

In case harm, injury or loss of opportunity is incurred by participants, provision should be made for compensation or payment for treatment with clear guidelines on obtaining this. In the event of significant harm, participants should be entitled to claim compensation regardless whether there was negligence or legal liability on any other basis or not.

The criteria for selecting research participants should be fair. The same group should not be used for repeat studies because of their easy accessibility, as this will make them bear an unfair share of the burden of participation. At the same time, it should be borne in mind that no particular group(s) should be unfairly excluded from research, as this could result in their unfair exclusion from the direct, indirect, or potential benefits of research.

## **Examination Process**

A candidate must submit three copies of a Master's dissertation or mini-dissertation and four copies of a Doctoral thesis for examination purposes. FPD retains the right to request the submission of additional copies and an electronic copy for examination.

Examiners are allowed six weeks to examine a dissertation or mini-dissertation or thesis and to deliver a comprehensive report and their recommendation regarding the result to the non-examining chairperson.

Examiners may compile their reports as they deem fit, but their reports should include comments on the following, taking the requirements of the HEQSF regarding NQF Level 9 into account :

- Scientific and academic standard of research:
  - research procedures and techniques;
  - methodology;
  - outlining and scope of research;
  - theoretical substantiation;
  - exploration of the literature;
  - grasp of the field of research; and
  - footnotes and bibliography.
- Scientific and academic quality of processing and presentation
  - processing;
  - presentation and analysis of data;
  - structure and logical development/arrangement of content (internal coherence and classification); and
  - critical findings.
- Language and editing.
- Technical presentation and layout.
- Examiners should also indicate whether they regard parts and/or the substance of the dissertation/thesis as publishable.

Examiners should clearly indicate on the result form whether the dissertation or thesis is:

- Accepted unamended.
- Accepted only after improvements (as specifically requested) have been made to the satisfaction of the supervisor in the additional copies. Such recommendation should allow the required improvements to realise within two months after release of the result. This option will typically be used where minor improvements are required (e.g. editorial improvements, corrections of citations and minor revisions of content).
- Referred back for revision and resubmission for examination. This option should be used if the recommended changes require substantial revision of content and/or structure.
- Rejected.

Percentage marks are assigned only to Master's dissertations. The pass mark is 50% and the distinction mark is 75%.

Examiners of Master's dissertations should clearly indicate in their reports whether a distinction should be awarded, or that they would not object to a distinction being awarded should this be indicated by the collective of the marks awarded by all the examiners.

Examiners must arrive at their findings and compile their reports independently from one another.

Examiners should complete the result form and submit it with their reports directly to the non-examining chairperson of the panel of examiners.

The non-examining chairperson receives all the examiners' reports and the supervisor's non-evaluative report. After critical consideration of such reports, compiles a report in which they justify the final recommendation. Pending finalisation of the result, the non-examining chairperson should not discuss any aspect of it with the supervisor or the candidate.

A unanimous result is preferable in the context of agreement between the examiners to:

- a pass (disagreement about an outright pass and minor corrections first to be made still constitutes agreement on a pass);
- distinction mark in respect of a Master's degree;
- failure with the concession of revision within one year (in which case the dissertation must be re-submitted and examined again and the candidate must re-register if applicable);
- an outright fail.

The result of a Master's dissertation or mini-dissertation or Doctoral thesis, be it pass, pass with distinction or fail, is not decided on the basis of the average of the marks awarded by the different examiners but on a judicious appraisal of the examiners' reports. The non-examining chairperson may substantiate and recommend a mark that deviates from the average to the Executive Dean or their nominee for consideration.

### **Appointment of Panel of Examiners:**

Once permission has been granted for a candidate to submit his or her dissertation/thesis for assessment, the Head of the School recommends the panel of examiners. The following criteria are taken into account when appointing examiners: academic qualification, expertise in the field and experience in the examination of dissertations and thesis at the level of the qualification they will be required to examine. The names of the recommended examiners are forwarded to the Academic Executive for approval. The candidate may not be informed of the names of the approved examiners.

The panel of examiners must consist of the following members:

- A non-examining chairperson, usually an experienced permanent senior member of the School, Head of the School, or the Academic Executive.
- Two examiners for a Master's degree, one external, and three examiners for a Doctoral degree, two external and one preferably being an international scholar.
- The supervisor may not be a member of the examining panel but must submit a non-evaluative report to the non-examining chairperson after the dissertation has been submitted for examination. This report is not made available to the candidate, nor to the examiners and the supervisor and examiners should not discuss the assessment of the dissertation prior to finalisation of its result.

### **Approval and release of the examination results**

The Academic Executive signs off on the examination report and forwards the result to the Registrar for processing.

The Report of the Panel of Examiners must be submitted to the Registrar.

Once the result of a candidate's dissertation has been approved, the non-examining chairperson must make available the examiners' reports, without disclosing their names, to the supervisor, co-supervisor and candidate, if requested.

After approval of the dissertation and before conferment of the degree, the candidate must submit the final electronic copy of the dissertation in electronic .pdf format to the Registrar for uploading on the FPD's repository.

### **Reporting of research findings**

Reporting of research findings advances scientific knowledge. Researchers who conducted the study have the right and the duty to publish research findings in scientific journals, books or other media. When they agree to delegate this responsibility to other individual(s) or organisation(s) they should do so only if they have received a mutually agreed commitment to publish or disseminate the results within an agreed period, with an agreed content and in an agreed manner.

Where there is a conflict between the advance of scientific knowledge and the protection of intellectual property (e.g. by way of patents) researchers should endeavour to convince the patent holder of the importance of publishing research findings.

If a client/sponsor/funder requires non-publication of results carried out on humans, or prior approval for the manner and content of reporting, such research proposal may be disapproved by the Research Ethics Committee. If the request not to publish is based on strategic or other reasonable grounds, the committee may consider non-publication of results for no more than one year following the completion of research. Researchers' publications should reflect the source(s) of funding and sponsors, if any.

Researchers should explain the methodology used, as well as the manners which ethical dilemmas encountered were resolved in their publications.

Aspects regarding authorship should be determined as the earliest possible phase of a study. The following guidelines should be followed for giving authorship credit while reporting the research in any form:

- Authorship, and its sequence in case of more than one author, should be based on the significance of contribution made in terms of ideas, conceptualisation, and actual performance of the research, analysis and writing of the report or any publication based on the research. Authorship and its sequence should not be based on the status of the individual within the institution or elsewhere.
- All other individuals not satisfying the criteria for authorship but whose contribution made the conduct and completion of research or publication possible should be properly acknowledged.
- A student should be listed as principal or first author on any multiple-authored publication that substantially derives from the student's dissertation or thesis.
- When data or information from other studies or publications is quoted or included, appropriate credit should be given.

When results are disseminated through the popular media, researchers should endeavour to ensure that media persons comprehend the limitations and implications of research results, and that distortions and misrepresentations in media reporting are minimised.

## **Accountabilities**

The Academic Committee is responsible for review and approval of this policy on an annual basis. The policy is to be distributed to staff via induction and distributed to students and FPD's community via the website and other publications.