

6. THESIS EXAMINATION

6.1 Introduction

The procedures apply to all programmes of study by research where assessment is entirely by thesis, possibly supplemented by a *viva voce* examination (for PhD candidates), where necessary/advisable.

They set out the framework for study for research degrees and the conditions for their award.

6.2 Procedures for Submission of the Thesis

- (i) A student will be eligible to submit his/her MPhil/PhD Thesis if he/she has satisfactorily completed the following two modules of the MRes programme: RM 5010 *Research at University of Mauritius: Processes & Methodology* and RM 5011 *Research Seminar Series*.
- (ii) A student is required to notify the Registrar of the University through the Dean of Faculty/Director of Centre and, with the approval of his/her supervisor(s) of his/her intention to submit the thesis three months prior to the proposed date of submission using a Notification for submission of Thesis form (RDE1). A *Transfer Report/Thesis Declaration Form* (RDDC) will have to be filled in and submitted together with the RDE1 form. A two-page abstract duly approved by the main supervisor must be attached with the forms.
- (iii) If a student intends to submit his/her thesis or has submitted the thesis, but does not obtain the supervisor's approval, the case shall be referred to the FRC/LLCRC. The latter will investigate and make appropriate recommendations normally to the Chairperson of Faculty/LLC Board.
- (iv) The thesis shall be submitted to the AO's Office in three copies (initially spiral-bound) together with a soft copy in the format specified as per the existing University regulations for the physical format and layout of thesis.
- (v) At the time of the first submission for examination, the student shall also submit a separate signed declaration of originality, countersigned by the main supervisor (RDDC).
- (vi) On submission of the final (two) hardbound copies together with a soft copy, a student shall also submit a signed statement from the supervisor certifying that all necessary corrections have been completed satisfactorily (RDDC), together with a signed statement from the student, on the appropriate form, that the hardbound copies of the thesis are (apart from any corrections made) identical to the original submission.
- (vii) Any work in an unbound form must be referenced in the thesis (e.g. CD-ROM, software, maps, statistics, artwork, etc.).

6.3 Thesis

Format and Layout

Refer to Section 4: **"FORMAT AND LAYOUT OF DISSERTATIONS AND THESES"**

Copyright

The copyright of a thesis remains with the author.

The student is required to submit two hardbound copies and a soft copy on CD of the final thesis, one copy to be deposited in the University library and the other to be kept by the main supervisor and the soft copy to be submitted to the Dean of Faculty/Director of Centre.

The student may request that a moratorium be imposed on access to the thesis for a period of time not exceeding 3 years as from the date of final submission. Any request for a moratorium should be addressed to the Dean of Faculty /Director of Centre, who will send his/her recommendations to the Faculty/LLC Board. The final approval will have to be sought from the Academic Management Committee.

6.4 Procedures for Appointment of External Examiners

- (i) Upon receipt of the Thesis Submission Form (Form RDE1), the Faculty/LLC Research Committee shall approve at least four External Examiners in order of priority from:
 - (a) Up to five names of External Examiners submitted by the supervisor(s) within one week after student's notification; and
 - (b) One External Examiner identified by the Faculty/LLC Research Committee.

In case the supervisor(s) does/do not submit up to five names of External Examiners by the given deadline, the Faculty/LLC Research Committee shall identify and approve at least four External Examiners in order of priority.

External Examiners should normally be required to meet the following criteria:

- (a) One External Examiner shall be a Professor and the other shall be at least at an Associate Professor level or equivalent.
- (b) The External Examiner should have recent experience of either supervising or examining PhD students in the relevant subject area.
- (c) For moderating an MPhil Thesis, the appointment of an External Examiner at Senior Lecturer level can also be considered subject to the Department concerned submitting strong justifications for such appointment. However, one of the two External Examiners should be at Professorial level.

It is recognised that in some cases, the most suitable person to act as an External Examiner for a particular student may be someone outside academia but who has recent experience in examining research degrees in the relevant field.

- (ii) Upon approval by the Faculty/LLC Research Committee, the Faculty/Centre Administrative Officer shall send an email to the approved External Examiners regarding (a) whether potential conflict(s) of interest is/are likely to occur as a result of examining a candidate's thesis and if so disclose it to the University and (b) IPR issues, in case the research work has IPR with potential for commercialisation.

Examples of 'potential conflict of interest' include:

- closely connected with or to the student to be examined, the supervisor or the internal examiner (e.g. relative, friend, someone in regular correspondence with the student about his/her work, former tutor of the student etc);
- someone who has been a staff member at the University of Mauritius within the last five years.

- (iii) If any of the approved External Examiners express any conflict of interest, the Faculty/LLC Research Committee shall identify and approve another External Examiner for the thesis.
- (iv) If no conflict of interest is expressed by the approved External Examiner(s), the Faculty/LLC Research Committee shall recommend the External Examiners in order of priority. Once approved by the Faculty/LLC Board, approval shall be sought from the Academic Management Committee and Senate will be informed accordingly.
- (v) Further to the appointment, the Faculty/Centre Administrative Officer shall send the theses to the first two External Examiners requesting the submission of the completed RDE2 (A) and (B) forms within two months.
- (vi) Within one month following submission of the thesis to the External Examiner(s), in case the list of External Examiners is exhausted, the Faculty/Centre shall start procedures for the appointment of new External Examiner(s) as per Section 6.4(i) of the existing regulations.
- (vii) If the External Examiner(s) has/have not submitted the completed forms (A) and (B) at the end of the second month, the Faculty/Centre Administrative Officer shall send the Thesis(es) to the next External Examiner(s) on the list of External Examiners appointed in order of priority.

However, if in the meantime the External Examiners have responded, their reports will be considered by the Board of Examiners and the new External Examiner(s) will still assess the thesis and he/she/they will be paid the usual honorarium.

- (viii) A penalty fee will be charged to students who do not submit their thesis by the prescribed deadline unless the students submit evidence of ill health or other cause which has been approved by the Dean of Faculty/Director of Centre as constituting sufficient reason for the delay in the submission of the thesis.

6.5 The Assessment and the External Examiners' Reports

- (i) The recommendation from the External Examiner [Form RDE2 (A)] shall be one of the following:
 - For immediate award of PhD with no corrections;
 - For immediate award of PhD with minor typographical errors to be corrected to the satisfaction of the supervisor(s);
 - For award of PhD subject to amendments to the text of the thesis being made to the satisfaction of the supervisor(s);
 - For revision and resubmission for PhD degree;
 - For award of an MPhil degree without amendments;
 - For award of an MPhil degree with amendments to the satisfaction of the Supervisor(s);
 - For revision and resubmission for MPhil degree;
 - No Award with no resubmission.
- (ii) The BOE will deliberate on the recommendations received from the External Examiners.
- (iii) Any amendments proposed by the External Examiner(s) must be communicated in *toto* by the Chair to the student through the supervisor(s). The Full External Examiner Report(s) [Form RDE2 (B)] must not be disclosed to non-BOE members. In case of amendments subject to supervisor(s) satisfaction, the supervisor(s) must inform the Chair of the BoE in writing that all corrections have been made to his/her/their satisfaction; the Chair will then make recommendation directly to the Faculty/LLC Board.

6.6 Board of Examiners

- (i) Any recommendation by the External Examiners as per 6.5 (i) will have to be considered by the Board of Examiners, which will report to Faculty/LLC Board.
- (ii) It is only when the Faculty/LLC Board recommends *either* an “Award for PhD or MPhil Degree’ *or* a “No Award” that its recommendations are submitted to Senate. The decision of Senate shall be communicated to the student through the Supervisor.
- (iii) Disagreement between External Examiners. Where there is major agreement between the External Examiners, a third External Examiner will be appointed. The recommendation of the third External Examiner will be final.

6.7 Appeals

There shall be no appeal on academic grounds. However, if the student feels that there has been a procedural irregularity, he/she may appeal against Senate’s decision on receipt of a formal letter from the Registrar. Any appeal with necessary justification(s) shall be lodged in writing to the Registrar within four weeks from the date a student is informed of Senate’s decision.

All cases of appeal shall be dealt with as per the existing University Regulations.