

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) MPhil/PhD Students will be expected to publish at least **one** Research Paper in an internationally peer-reviewed Journal prior to the final submission of their Thesis for examination.

(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.

After receipt of the RDE1 form and until submission of the MPhil Thesis or PhD Thesis, a reminder shall be sent every month by the Dean of Faculty/Director of Centre to the student concerned for submission of the MPhil Thesis or PhD Thesis.

(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/CILLRC. The latter will investigate and make appropriate recommendations to the Faculty/CILL 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) Also, all students must compulsorily upload their thesis through the Turnitin Platform except for cases where there are IPR/commercialisation issues.

- Main Project Supervisor(s) are expected to apprise their research students on what Turnitin is, how it operates and the reason why the use of Turnitin is recommended in the assessment of theses, as per established guidelines.
- Project Supervisor shall create one (1) Class and two (2) Assignments [one (1) for draft & one (1) for final] in the Turnitin Platform for all thesis students.
- Each student shall be allowed to submit his/her draft thesis through 'Turnitin' for a maximum of two (2) times, prior to submitting the final thesis.
- The student will have access to his/her first originality report(s) and will be able to revise his/her work (if necessary) before submitting the final thesis.
- Only the Main Supervisor shall have access to the final Turnitin originality reports. Same will have to be made available to the other Co-Supervisor and Associate Supervisor.
- Any MPhil Thesis, MPhil Transfer Report or PhD Thesis not submitted through the Turnitin Platform will be unreceivable.

- A copy of the Report generated through the Turnitin Platform should be submitted to the Chairperson of the Faculty Research Committee.
- (vi) 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).
- (vii) 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.
- (viii) 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/CILL Board. The final approval will have to be sought from the Teaching and Research Committee.

6.4 Procedures for Appointment of External Examiners

- (i) Upon receipt of the Thesis Submission Form (Form RDE1), the Faculty/CILL Research Committee shall normally be held within two weeks to consider the appointment of External Examiners and shall approve at least four External Examiners in order of priority from:
- (a) Up to four names of External Examiners submitted by the supervisor(s) within one week after student’s notification; and
 - (b) Four External Examiners identified by the Faculty/CILL Research Committee.

In case the supervisor(s) does/do not submit up to four names of External Examiners by the given deadline, the Faculty/CILL 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.
- (d) In case of difficulty in finding External Examiners in certain fields, one of the External Assessors for the MPhil Transfer Report may act as External Examiner for the PhD Thesis. However, the second External Examiner should be a new one.

If External Examiners are not appointed within a period of two (2) months, after the submission date of the Theses, the Office of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academia) will look into same.

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/CILL 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/CILL 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/CILL Research Committee shall recommend the External Examiners in order of priority. Once approved by the Faculty/CILL Board, approval shall be sought from the Teaching and Research Committee and Senate will be informed accordingly.

In case of any identified conflict of interest, the views of the Director of Legal Affairs shall be sought through the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academia) and the Vice-Chancellor.

- (v) Within two weeks following 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) 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.

- (vii) 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:

- ♣ Award of PhD with no corrections;
- ♣ Award of PhD subject to minor corrections to the satisfaction of the supervisor(s) and a person designated by the Deans of Faculty/Officer-in-Charge, CILL;
- ♣ Award of PhD subject to substantial amendments to the satisfaction of the supervisor(s) and a person designated by the Deans of Faculty/Officer-in-Charge, CILL;
- ♣ Substantial amendments/major revision and re-examination by External Examiner (in case the examiner is not satisfied with the resubmission, the award will be an MPhil degree);
- ♣ Award of an MPhil degree without amendments;
- ♣ Award of an MPhil degree with amendments to the satisfaction of the Supervisor(s) and a person designated by the Deans of Faculty/Officer-in-Charge, CILL;
- ♣ Revision and resubmission for MPhil degree to the satisfaction of the Supervisor(s) and a person designated by the Deans of Faculty/Officer-in-Charge, CILL;
- ♣ Revision and resubmission to the External Examiner for MPhil degree;
- ♣ Reject the Thesis.

- (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) and relevant extracts of the External Examiner(s) Reports as decided by the BoE should be given to the student(s) 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/CILL Board.

6.6 Board of Examiners

- (i) Any recommendation by the External Examiners as per 6.5 (i) will have to be considered within one week by the Board of Examiners, which will report to Faculty/CILL Board.
- (ii) It is only when the Faculty/CILL 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 disagreement 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.

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