

Doctoral Procedures

Introduction

These procedures give effect to the regulations for all doctoral degrees with theses including Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) and professional doctorates, including the Doctor of Musical Arts (DMA), Doctor of Education (EdD) and the Health Doctorates (DHlth, DMid, DNurs).

Unless otherwise stated:

- (i) The reference numbers in the sub-headings relate to the relevant sections in the [Doctoral Regulations](#).
- (ii) Where reference is made to “School”, this may refer also to an Institute or Centre where these take on the role of School and have the appropriate committee and administrative structures in place.
- (iii) Where reference is made to a “School Committee”, this may be set up at programme or faculty level, depending on the relevant academic structure.
- (iv) Where reference is made to “School”, the delegated authority in a School may vary according to the procedures operating in the individual School, provided that such delegations are formally approved by the Head of School.

The procedures are intended primarily for staff who are supervising doctoral candidates or who are responsible for candidature management and support within a School or Faculty.

Note that there are, in addition to these procedures, a series of guidelines for different aspects of candidature. These are available on the Wellington Faculty of Graduate Research ([FGR website](#)).

1 Admission to the degree (Doctoral Regulations 4.1)

The admission requirements are detailed in the relevant degree regulations in the University Calendar.

1.1 Application process 4.1(b)

- a) Applications for admission to all doctoral degrees are processed centrally by the Scholarships and Doctoral Admissions Office (SDAO).
- b) Applications are made online and the admission process is combined with applications for Wellington Doctoral Scholarships.
- c) Applications are considered three times per year following 1 March, 1 July and 1 November closing dates for applications. Applications outside these closing dates may be considered in exceptional circumstances. These circumstances usually include the availability of external funding.

Note: Applicants to the International Institute of Modern Letters are considered in July only.

Note: Applicants for the professional doctorates in Education and in Health may apply at any time, but commence Part 1 of their programme in March.

- d) Applicants are not required to identify a supervisor prior to making an application, although they may do so if they wish. Some Schools may choose not to consider applicants without such prior contact. An in-person meeting or video-conference with applicants prior to making final admission decisions is recommended.
- e) Admission recommendations are made by the School and Associate Dean (PGR) and outcomes are advised to the candidate by the SDAO. Individual supervisors may not give any undertaking of acceptance into the programme.
- f) Applicants are required to submit a “statement of research interests” (not a research proposal), along with a sample of their academic writing and information about their previous research experience.

Note: PhD candidates will develop a full research proposal during the period of provisional registration.

Note: Candidates for a professional doctorate develop a full research proposal during Part 1 of their programme.

- g) Full information and access to the online application process is available on the [FGR website](#).

1.2 Selection of candidates

- a) The School Committee reviews applications for admission and also ranks applicants who have indicated that they wish to be considered for a Wellington Doctoral Scholarship.
- b) An applicant may be offered a place when the School Committee recommends the applicant to the Dean FGR via the Associate Dean (PGR) and after consulting with the Head of School. The recommendation will confirm that:
 - (i) an adequate supervisory team can be formed; and

- (ii) the applicant's academic background is adequate; and
- (iii) adequate resources are available.

Note: The appropriateness of the intended project to the general research strategy of the School may also be taken into account.

- c) An applicant is not required to have met the formal English language requirement at the time of application but must have done so before admission; any offer of place will be conditional upon their doing so. School Committees may, however, take account of any previous failures to reach that requirement.

Note: It is not possible to have the English language requirement waived.

- d) The recommendation will also state whether individual requirements such as coursework are necessary (see Doctoral Regulations section 4.3.1). If coursework is required, the offer of place must detail what grade the candidate is expected to achieve.

Note: There are other constraints on coursework for PhD candidates which are detailed in section 4.3.1 of the Doctoral Regulations.

Note: If coursework is required, dates of a teaching semester must be taken into account before agreeing a start date. A candidate who is unable to arrive in New Zealand in time to commence a prescribed course may not be enrolled.

- e) The home Faculty will provide a ranked list of applicants for consideration for scholarships by the Victoria University of Wellington Research Degrees Scholarships Committee.
- f) Applicants are advised by the SDAO within 6 weeks of the outcome of the application for admission and whether or not they will receive Wellington Doctoral Scholarship funding.

1.3 Resources for postgraduate research

- a) The University undertakes to provide doctoral candidates with resources as agreed in the [Resource Agreement for Thesis Students \(RAfTS\)](#).
- b) Schools will look carefully at the resourcing implications of an applicant's expression of interest. If they are unable to provide resources beyond the standard MRA, this should be made clear to the applicant before any offer of place is confirmed.
- c) Candidates who require additional resources are expected to discuss these and document an agreement with their supervisor/s within one month FTE of initial enrolment as part of the [Confirmation of PhD Provisional Registration](#). Any agreement and/or the CPR form must be approved by the Head of School and home Faculty Associate Dean (PGR) and reviewed at the time of the move from provisional to full registration.

2 Course of study (Doctoral Regulations 4.2)

2.1 *Theses in a language other than English or te reo Māori 4.2 (h)*

- a) Permission to submit a thesis in a language other than English or te reo Māori is only given in special circumstances and is not intended as a convenience to enable candidates to complete a thesis in their first language.
- b) The application to submit in another language should ideally be considered when the School wishes to offer the applicant a place, or at the confirmation of provisional registration (one month) but must be confirmed at the latest at the move to full registration.
- c) The application requires the approval of the Dean FGR, and such approval must be formally given before confirmation of full registration.

2.2 *Including published work in a thesis 4.2 (i)*

- a) Victoria University of Wellington does not offer a 'thesis by publications' option; it does, however, permit (and encourage) candidates to publish their research while they are registered. Candidates must abide by the [Recognition of Authorship Policy](#) when publishing their work.
- b) When submitting their thesis for examination, candidates will be required to provide evidence that they have permission from the copyright holder to include the published work, even though they are the author. Refer to the [Guidelines for including publications in a PhD thesis](#) and to the [Declaration](#) that must accompany submission of the thesis.

2.3 *Thesis word limits 4.2 (j)*

- a) Word limits are as follows:
 - PhD – 100,000 words
 - Doctor of Musical Arts – 25,000
 - Doctor of Education – 70,000
 - Health doctorates – 70,000
- b) Note that there is no prescribed minimum word count for a thesis, but examiners are asked to determine whether or not the thesis makes a 'substantial' contribution to its field.
- c) The word limit includes 'everything that the examiner needs to read' including necessary information such as the abstract, reference list or bibliography, footnotes or endnotes and essential appendices.
- d) Non-examinable but useful information, in addition to that required in (c) above, such as extensive data sources, questionnaires, the text to be translated or extensive tables, may be appended to the thesis in electronic format. Such material is not included within the word limit.
- e) A check on the word limit is included in the Candidate Development Plan (CDP) as a reminder to regularly review the scope of the research project.
- f) Permission to exceed the word limit will be considered in exceptional circumstances only. The breadth or depth of the study undertaken does not constitute an exceptional circumstance; nor does proximity of intended submission.

- g) Where there are good grounds for exceeding the word limit the candidate and supervisor/s must make the case for exemption in writing to the Dean FGR, normally no later than at the time of transition from provisional to full registration. They will be advised of the outcome of the application by the FGR examinations team, who will retain a copy of the permission on the candidate's file.
- h) Requests to exceed the length requirements of the doctoral thesis must be made on the [Permission to exceed the word limit](#) form.
- i) If the examination process results in corrections and amendments, or revise and resubmit for a second examination, the relevant word limit will continue to apply unless the examiners explicitly affirm that the limit may be exceeded.

2.4 Withholding access to a thesis 4.2 (k)

- a) Theses are expected to be publicly available through the Research Archive in the University Library.
- b) The withholding of theses is subject to the [Withholding of Theses Procedure](#) and to section 4.12 of the [Library Statute](#).
- c) The maximum period for which a thesis may be withheld is normally two years.
- d) Common grounds for withholding access include the protection of intellectual property pending commercialisation or filing for a patent. In some situations, it may be necessary to apply for a period of withholding in order to seek iwi approval or participant approval before the thesis is made publicly available.
- e) Simply wishing to publish from a thesis is not normally sufficient grounds for withholding access, unless the applicant has a publishing contract or other evidence of interest from a publisher.
- f) If a candidate believes that a two-year embargo may be insufficient (particularly in relation to personal or participant safety), it may be advisable to reconsider the scope and nature of the thesis.
- g) Application to withhold a thesis from the public domain must be made on the [Request to withhold access to a thesis](#) form and submitted to the Dean FGR, normally well before submission of the thesis for examination (but see 2.4(i)). Candidates will be advised of the outcome of the application by the FGR examinations team, who will retain a copy of the permission on the candidate's file.
- h) Where approval to withhold is granted prior to the thesis being submitted for examination, the examiners will be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement.
- i) If the matter of withholding arises as a result of the examination process, the candidate may elect to make a request to withhold access. In such cases, the Dean FGR will consider the views of the examiners when making a determination on the request.

3 Enrolment and registration (Doctoral Regulations 4.4)

- a) The conditions of enrolment and registration are detailed in the Doctoral Regulations sections 4.4.1 and 4.4.2.
- b) Enrolment covers the period from a candidate's start date until the final copy of the thesis is lodged in the University Library, or one of the other outcomes provided for in Doctoral Regulations section 4.4.1(a) applies. Within the enrolment period, candidates are registered for supervision and required to pay tuition fees. The Student Services Levy is attached to the enrolment and so remains payable even during a period of suspension.
- c) Except for any approved periods of suspension or while under examination, a candidate is required to be registered and to pay tuition fees.

3.1 Initial enrolment and start dates

- a) All doctoral candidates are required to make an appointment to enrol in person with the Administrator at the Wellington Faculty of Graduate Research.
- b) The first period of registration for a PhD candidate is from their start date until 31 December of the first year – see section 3.2 regarding annual re-registration.
- c) Start dates are on the 1st of the month from February to November only. Due to the Christmas closedown period, students wishing to start in December or January must have the approval of the Associate Dean (PGR) in their home Faculty.
- d) Students who arrive mid-month will commence their enrolment from the first of the following month. Enrolment cannot be 'back-dated' to commence prior to the candidate's arrival.
- e) Refer to the [FGR website](#)

Note: Cohort based programmes and most professional doctorates have one start date per year (usually in March).

Note: Where a student has a course specified on their Offer of Place, Schools must ensure that the student's start date is consistent with the course dates.

3.2 Registration timeframes and annual process

- a) After the first period of registration, candidates are then re-registered (through a central process administered by the FGR) each year from 1 January until 31 December until the year in which they expect to submit their thesis for examination.
- b) Each year in September candidates are advised that they will be re-registered for a further 12 months, comprising the following calendar year, unless they are withdrawing, suspending their study or they are eligible for a shorter period of registration of three, six or nine months prior to submission for examination.

- c) Students who do not wish to be re-registered for the full calendar year must complete an [Exception Form](#) and return it to the FGR by the required deadline. Registration for a shorter period of time is subject to approval from the School.
- d) The annual process is coordinated by the FGR in conjunction with the Schools, the Scholarships Office and the Fees Office. Bulk registrations are processed by the Enrolments Team in late November/early December.

3.3 Ad hoc registration

Ad hoc registration is managed by the Student Advisors in the Faculty of Graduate Research. This applies when a candidate:

- (i) returns after an approved suspension of study; or
- (ii) misses the annual registration process; or
- (iii) seeks a change of registration after the annual process has closed; or
- (iv) has had a shorter period of registration approved (3, 6, or 9 months) but does not submit before the end of their registration period (31 March, 30 June, 30 September) and needs to register for a further period.

3.4 Conversion from a Victoria University of Wellington Master's by thesis to a PhD Degree 4.4.3 (a) and Master's Thesis Regulations section 15

- a) A student who has not submitted their Master's thesis (90 points or 120 points) for examination may apply to convert their enrolment from a Master's thesis degree into a PhD degree.
- b) An application to convert the thesis should normally be made within 9 months full-time (or equivalent) of initial enrolment.
- c) Applications should be finalised, and the PhD enrolment confirmed, within 11 months of registration for the Master's thesis; exceptions require the approval of the relevant Associate Dean (PGR).

Note: A research portfolio cannot normally be converted to a PhD. Any such conversion must be approved by the Dean FGR.

- d) An application must have support from the current supervisor/s and be made on the [School/Faculty PhD Approval Form - upgrade from Master's](#) form.
- e) Supervisor/s must:
 - (i) confirm that the topic can be extended in a manner suitable to provide a PhD project; and
 - (ii) confirm that the candidate has demonstrated the aptitude and level of competence required for PhD study, including English language proficiency.
- f) The supervisor/s and the candidate must agree in writing the additional work to be undertaken and this document must be submitted with the application.
- g) The School Research Committee (SRC) must also approve the application. It must, in consultation with the Head of School, confirm:

- (i) that the candidate is a suitable candidate to be transferred to a PhD; and
 - (ii) that the project can be extended in a manner suitable to provide a PhD project; and
 - (iii) that adequate supervision is available, with an indication of who the new supervisory team will be (the supervisor/s of the Master's thesis will not necessarily remain on the PhD supervisory team); and
 - (iv) that adequate resources to support the research project are available.
- g) If the SRC is unable to recommend acceptance of the application to convert, it should so inform the candidate, explaining why. The decision of the SRC not to confirm a conversion is final.
 - h) Final approval of the conversion from a Master's thesis is by the relevant Associate Dean (PGR).
 - i) A candidate seeking to upgrade from a Master's to a PhD does not need to apply online. Application information and approvals are recorded on [School/Faculty PhD Approval Form - upgrade from Master's](#). Applications may be considered at any time.
 - j) If candidates wish to be considered for a Wellington Doctoral Scholarship they may apply in a subsequent round.
 - k) The date of first enrolment for the Master's degree becomes the date of provisional registration for the PhD.
 - l) Candidates who convert from a Masters degree to a PhD are required to satisfy all requirements for full registration (see section 5.0).

3.5 Conversion from a PhD degree to a Master's by thesis degree

4.4.3(b)

- a) Conversion from a PhD to a Master's may occur:
 - (i) by decision of a candidate in conjunction with their supervisor/s at any time during candidature prior to submission of the thesis for examination; or
 - (ii) as a result of a decision of the School Research Committee that a candidate does not meet the standard for achieving full registration; or
 - (iii) as a result of a decision of the examiners.
- b) Conditions apply and are detailed in the [Procedure for converting from a PhD degree to a Master's Thesis degree](#). It is essential that these conditions are read in advance of any such conversion being recommended or application being made. Particular attention must be paid to the visa implications for international students.
- c) An application to convert to a Master's degree as in (i) must be made using the [Change of enrolment: PhD to Master's by thesis form](#) to the Associate Dean (PGR), justifying the change. The written support of the Head of School and academic supervisors is also needed, as is the agreement of the candidate.

- d) Where the conversion is as a result of (ii) the decision will be documented on the [Movement from Provisional to Full PhD Registration SRC Report](#) form and approved by the Associate Dean (PGR).
- e) Where the candidate is a scholarship holder, the School must advise the Scholarships Office of the candidate's change in circumstances.
- f) Where a Master's degree is awarded as an outcome of the PhD examination process (refer to Doctoral Regulations 4.13 (b) (iii)), as determined by the Dean FGR, this is processed by FGR.

3.6 Suspension of study 4.4.3(c)

- a) Suspensions are intended to provide for personal situations such as parental leave, protracted illness on the part of the candidate or a close relative, and requirements from employers. Wherever possible, applications should be made in advance.
- b) Short-term absences from the University, such as "annual leave" (up to a total of four weeks per annum), statutory holidays, conference attendances, academic meetings and short-term illness should be advised to the supervisor and the postgraduate co-ordinator or school administrator and noted on the candidate's file, but do not constitute grounds for a suspension of study.
- c) Applications for a suspension of study need to include:
 - (i) a statement from the candidate giving the reason for requesting a suspension, plus supporting evidence if appropriate, e.g., a doctor's certificate or letter from an employer; and
 - (ii) a statement from the primary supervisor indicating support or otherwise of the suspension; and
 - (iii) the candidate's latest CDP.
- d) Applications for suspension of study are to be made on the [Request for a Suspension form](#).
- e) Scholarship holders must advise the Scholarships Office of their intention to suspend. Scholarship payments will be suspended and only reinstated when the candidate formally advises the Scholarships Office that they have resumed study (i.e., rather than payments being automatically reinstated at the end date of the suspension).
- f) Suspensions are granted in whole months (but need not be timed to begin on the first of a month) and will not normally exceed 12 calendar months in total across all suspensions. Restrictions apply to international candidates and to holders of scholarships. (See below).

Note: Immigration New Zealand (INZ) regulations mean that international candidates may only suspend their study for up to a total of three months within any 12 month period, to a total of 12 months over the duration of their candidature. INZ must be notified of all periods of suspension. International students considering applying to suspend their study should contact the Visa Officer at Wellington University International for advice.

Note: International candidates are not permitted to suspend their study in order to engage in paid employment (INZ regulations).

- g) Holders of Wellington Doctoral Scholarships are normally limited to six months suspension in total and scholarship payments are also suspended during an approved period of suspension.

Note: Holders of other scholarships are likely to have restrictions on suspension and should check the conditions of their scholarship award.

- h) The approval of the Dean FGR is required for applications which:
 - (i) take the total period of suspension beyond 12 months during a candidacy; or
 - (ii) are made by a candidate who is revising and resubmitting the thesis for a second examination; or
 - (iii) request a retrospective suspension (in whole or in part).
- i) The Associate Dean (PGR) in the home Faculty may approve any other requests for suspension.
- j) Particularly good grounds and evidence will be required for a retrospective suspension as the University will have claimed government funding and scholarship payments will have been made. An application for a retrospective suspension should be made as soon as possible after the event which gives rise to the claim for a retrospective suspension. Applications made more than two months after the event are unlikely to be approved.
- k) Where an application for a suspension is declined, the candidate may continue with the period of registration or withdraw from the degree.

3.7 Extensions beyond 48 months total registration 4.4.3 (d)

- a) Students are normally expected to have submitted their doctoral thesis within 48 months FTE of initial enrolment.
- b) The Student Achievement Component of funding (SAC funding) from the government ceases at 48 months full-time (or equivalent).
- c) Applications for extensions are to be made on the [Request for an Extension form](#).
- d) All applications require;
 - (i) a reasonable justification for a specified period of time (with supporting information); and
 - (ii) a copy of the latest CDP; and
 - (iii) submission of a timeline detailing the steps to completion; and
 - (iv) support of supervisor/s; and
 - (v) sign off by the Head of School or delegate of any funding and workload implications
 - (vi) approval of the Associate Dean (PGR); and
 - (vii) final approval from the Dean FGR.
- e) Extensions must be requested in whole calendar months and normally no more than 12 months extension will be approved.

- f) Further requests for extensions, without significant evidence of progress, may be declined and the candidate's enrolment may be terminated.

3.8 Change of status from full-time to part-time enrolment or from part-time to full-time enrolment 4.4.3(e)

- a) Applications should be made on the [Application to change between Full-time and Part-time Enrolment form](#). Approval is by the Associate Dean (PGR) in the home Faculty.
- b) Scholarship holders who are contemplating a change of status must consider the conditions of their scholarship. Wellington Doctoral Scholarships require candidates to be registered full-time.
- c) International candidates on a study visa are required by Immigration New Zealand to be enrolled full-time, unless they have a variation of conditions noted on their visa.

3.9 Withdrawal from the programme 4.4.3(f)

- a) Candidates withdrawing from the PhD programme should complete the [Notification of withdrawal from PhD study](#) form.
- b) Candidates should discuss their intention to withdraw with the supervisory team in advance, and are advised to consider whether other alternatives, such as suspending study for a period or converting to a Master's degree might be appropriate. Conditions apply to [conversion to a Master's degree](#).

Note: There are likely to be visa implications for international candidates who withdraw from the programme, or who seek to transfer to another programme in this or any other institution.

3.10 Termination of enrolment 4.4.3(g)

- a) Where the Associate Dean (PGR) accepts a School Research Committee recommendation to terminate a candidate's enrolment, this must be referred to the Dean FGR for final approval.
- b) It is expected that the concerns leading up to the recommendation for termination of enrolment will have been discussed with the candidate who will have been given adequate opportunity to address these.
- c) The final outcome will be formally communicated to the candidate in writing by the Dean FGR.
- d) A candidate whose enrolment is terminated by the University will pay fees until the date on which the decision to terminate is notified and may have refunded any fees paid in advance for the period beyond that date (with the refund calculated in twelfths of the annual fees). Scholarships payments, if any, will also cease and the candidate may be required to repay any stipend payments made in advance of the date of termination.
- e) Where, as a result of the examination process, a candidate is required to make corrections and amendments (up to six months), they are not required to pay fees, but will be using University resources. It is important therefore that they re-present the thesis within the specified time frame or apply to the Dean FGR for an extension; failure to do so will result in termination of the candidature.

4 Attendance at the University (Doctoral Regulations 4.5)

4.1 Definition of attendance

- a) Working under academic supervision will normally require a candidate to live in the Wellington region and to attend the University in person.
- b) For the purposes of this section, attendance at the University does not preclude:
 - (i) attendance at some other institution in the Wellington area at which supervision is being provided for the candidate;
 - (ii) attendance at an overseas university under a co-tutelle arrangement. Refer to the [Guidelines for Co-tutelle PhDs](#);
 - (iii) regular breaks such as “annual leave” (of up to four weeks in total per annum), statutory holidays, short-term illness, conference attendances and academic meetings.
- c) It is accepted that candidates may need to work away from the University for reasons such as to undertake field work or to visit facilities at other institutions, e.g., laboratories, libraries, museums (see 4.3 below).
- d) In some circumstances approval to enrol as a distance student may be granted, either for all or part of the candidature. Conditions apply and an agreement must be approved by the Dean FGR or by the Associate Dean (PGR) if a candidature takes place within a recognised research institution. Refer to the Guidelines for Doctoral Study by Distance.

4.2 Duration of absence from the University

- a) Government requirements mean that international candidates studying for a PhD in New Zealand on a study visa are limited to 12 months total absence during the PhD for approved research purposes, and absence prior to full registration is limited to three months.
- b) Domestic candidates (including Australians) are not limited to 12 months overall but are normally limited to three months absence during provisional registration.

4.3 Absence from the University for approved research purposes

- a) If a candidate needs to work at a location other than the University, the period away must be covered by an agreement and approved by the School Research Committee.
- b) The work undertaken at the alternative location must be research that is directly related to the candidate’s own topic. Writing up a thesis does not qualify under this heading.
- c) The [Application to undertake PhD Research away](#) is available on the FGR website. This must be completed and approved by the Head of School or SRC, and Associate Dean (PGR) before departure.
- d) Scholarship holders must advise the Scholarships Office that they have approval to be absent from the University and provide the Scholarships Office with a copy of the agreement.

- e) Candidates who have been required to revise and resubmit may not undertake research away from the University except with the permission of the Dean FGR.

5 Provisional and full registration (Doctoral Regulations 4.6)

5.1 Provisional registration

- a) During the period of provisional registration candidates (in conjunction with their primary supervisor or co-supervisors) are expected to establish and make satisfactory progress on agreed-upon performance standards. Indicators of satisfactory progress may include those listed below. Most of these will be demonstrated in the full research proposal:
- knowledge of literature in the field of study;
 - the ability to summarise, interpret and critique that literature;
 - the ability to design research tasks;
 - the ability to summarise, interpret and evaluate data;
 - the ability to communicate research findings in formats appropriate to the discipline;
 - the ability to argue a case;
 - satisfactory completion of any required coursework.
- b) Each School should ensure that provisionally registered candidates are aware of the standards expected with respect to applicable indicators of progress.
- c) It is the School's responsibility to document the progress of all candidates (see section 7.0). This is particularly important during provisional registration and any concerns about the candidate's ability to meet the standards for doctoral study should be noted.
- d) It is expected that candidates will be involved in discussions about their progress and given appropriate opportunities to address any identified shortcomings.

5.2 Criteria for progression to full registration

- a) To progress from provisional to full registration, the candidate must:
- (i) write a full research proposal (see section 5.3 below) the length of which is determined by School regulations; and
 - (ii) meet any School or programme requirements developed by the School Research Committee and approved by the Associate Dean (PGR); and
 - (iii) meet any individual requirements imposed by the School.
- b) Candidates for a professional doctorate must satisfactorily complete all of the requirements of Part 1 (as specified in the regulations) before progressing to Part 2. Successful completion of Part 1 is considered to be equivalent to achieving full registration.
- c) It is strongly recommended that each candidate should present a seminar on their work, either as a requirement for movement from provisional to full registration or soon after movement to full registration, in order to gain

experience in oral presentation of academic work and to realise the benefits of collegial discussion of the work-in-progress (see section 5.4 below).

- d) Schools or programmes must publish information about their specific requirements in (a)(ii) above. The requirements should also be discussed with enrolling candidates and included in school orientations or briefings for new PhD candidates.
- e) All full research proposals may be submitted to the University's plagiarism detection software. In the event of plagiarism being detected please refer to the [Student Conduct Statute](#).

5.3 Research proposal

As appropriate for the discipline and as published by the School, full research proposals should contain some or all of the following elements:

- a) a literature review;
- b) an outline of the basic thesis/research question;
- c) discussion of appropriate theoretical framework(s);
- d) details of appropriate methodology;
- e) details of any special resources or equipment required (beyond what is specified in the Minimum Resources Agreement);
- f) a statement as to whether the research requires ethics approval and, if so, when it will be sought; if approval has already been granted for the proposed research or for preliminary work, this should be noted;
- g) a discussion of any intellectual property issues to which the research may give rise;
- h) a statement that there are no foreseeable cultural, social or legal impediments to the successful completion and/or publication of the research;
- i) a tentative timetable for the completion of the thesis, including preliminary goals for the next six months.

If the thesis will include non-standard material (compositions, designs, works of film or theatre, performances and so on), the proposal must detail this and the SRC must satisfactorily resolve any challenges involved in examining and archiving such material.

Note: See also Section 8.5(c) about approval for non-electronic submission of theses and related material.

5.4 Presentation of the proposal

- a) Schools/programmes are free to determine the format of presentations, including determining whether an oral presentation is required.
- b) Candidates must know in advance whether or not the presentation is open to other staff or students, whether any member of the audience may ask questions, and who will be responsible for any formal assessment of the proposal and presentation.
- c) Candidates can expect to receive questions and feedback from those in attendance. Any feedback should be documented for the candidate's reference.

5.5 Application for full registration

- a) The School administrator will run a monthly report from ResearchMaster and alert the postgraduate co-ordinator and the candidate that the registration date is approaching.
- b) Applicants are required to meet all applicable criteria in section 5.2 above.
- c) Applications for full registration must be made within 12 months of provisional registration (or equivalent). The extension that may be available under 5.6 (below) can only be granted after consideration of the application. It cannot be used to delay the application until 15 months. Failure to apply for full registration within 12 months may be grounds for termination of candidature.
- d) The School Research Committee (SRC) will scrutinise applications to advance to full registration or may set up an *ad hoc* committee of not fewer than three members to do this.
- e) The SRC should determine:
 - (i) that the candidate has sufficient knowledge and understanding of the research topic; and
 - (ii) that the candidate has demonstrated the skills and ability required to complete a successful doctoral thesis; and
 - (iii) that the research proposal outlines an appropriate theoretical framework which will lead to a defensible thesis; and
 - (iv) that the proposed research is original or adds value to existing knowledge; and
 - (v) that the research can be placed into the existing body of knowledge – for this purpose a summary of the recent research literature relevant to the topic must be included; and
 - (vi) that where the School requires presentation of the proposal as a condition of moving to full registration, this has been satisfactorily completed; and
 - (vii) that any other School/programme requirements have been satisfactorily met; and
 - (viii) that any necessary coursework (see Doctoral Regulations 4.6) undertaken within the provisional registration period has been completed successfully and assessed at the required standard; and
 - (ix) that any individual requirements imposed by the School as a condition of the candidate's provisional registration have been satisfactorily completed.

5.6 Outcomes of application for full registration

- a) Using the relevant [Movement from Provisional to Full Registration SRC Report](#) form the School Research Committee (SRC) may make one of the following recommendations to the Associate Dean (PGR):
 - (i) that the candidate's movement to full registration should be approved; or

- (ii) that the research proposal should be revised and resubmitted (with a timeframe for doing so); or
 - (iii) that the candidate should convert their enrolment to a Master's by thesis degree; or
 - (iv) that the candidate's registration should be terminated.
- b) Where the criteria outlined in section 5.5(e) above are met, the SRC will recommend that full registration be confirmed.
- c) Where the recommendation is that the proposal be revised and re-submitted:
 - (i) The SRC must believe that the candidate is capable of correcting the proposal within a suitable timeframe (see (iii) below) and then going on to successful doctoral study.
 - (ii) The SRC must provide clear written feedback to the candidate regarding what is required to meet the requisite standards and must specify a timeframe within which the candidate needs to re-apply for approval.
 - (iii) If revisions will take the period of provisional registration beyond 12 months for full-time candidates or 24 months for half-time candidates, the SRC must recommend to the Associate Dean (PGR) that the period of provisional registration be extended. The maximum extension permitted is three months (full-time equivalent).
- d) Where the recommendation is to convert to a Master's by thesis degree the processes in section 3.5 above will apply. Refer to the [Procedure for converting from a PhD degree to a Master's Thesis degree](#).
- e) Where the recommendation is to terminate registration:
 - (i) The SRC should meet with the candidate and explain face-to-face why this action is recommended and what support is available to the candidate. The candidate should also receive the decision in writing.
 - (ii) The candidature is terminated by the Dean FGR on the advice of the Associate Dean (PGR).

6 Supervision (Doctoral Regulations 4.7)

6.1 Qualifications of academic supervisors

- a) The qualifications of academic supervisors are detailed in the Doctoral Regulations section 4.7.2 and include having a doctorate or a research record, topic knowledge, and capacity to supervise. Academic supervisors must also have completed FGR's Orientation to Postgraduate Research Supervision programme. It is the responsibility of the Head of School to confirm that a prospective supervisor has completed the necessary orientation; records of attendance are held by the FGR.
- b) An academic supervisor must have at least 12 months experience of supervising doctoral candidates at Victoria University of Wellington or another university, or have successfully supervised Master's by thesis students to completion, before being appointed as a primary supervisor. At the discretion of the Head of School, more experience of supervision may be required.

6.2 Responsibilities of the School

The School which accepts a candidate, and in which the candidate is registered, has a range of responsibilities as detailed below. Formally, the responsibilities belong to the Head of School who may delegate, as appropriate within the School, to the SRC or its convenor or to a postgraduate co-ordinator. The School must ensure that:

- a) At least two appropriately qualified supervisors who have the expertise and workload allocation to supervise the candidate's research are appointed to the supervisory team;
- b) School resources are provided to support the research project to completion;
- c) supervision and candidature arrangements comply with University policies;
- d) changes to the supervisory team are notified to the home Faculty and the Wellington Faculty of Graduate Research (FGR) on the [Supervisory changes PhD candidates](#) form;
- e) if the primary supervisor is away for more than a month, appropriate supervision arrangements are in place;
- f) problems involving any aspect of candidature are addressed promptly;
- g) suitable examiners of the thesis are recommended to the Dean FGR;
- h) the quality of supervision is monitored;
- i) the Scholarships Office is advised of any changes of enrolment.

6.3 Responsibilities of academic supervisors 4.7.3

- a) Academic supervisors have responsibilities to their supervisees, to the wider academic community involved in the subject area(s) within which the thesis is being written, to their Schools and to the University.
- b) Academic supervisors are expected to assist candidates to complete the research within an agreed time frame, to maintain and enhance the reputation of the School and the University, and to encourage the highest possible

academic standards. This includes taking reasonable steps consistent with available resources:

- (i) to provide a framework within which the academic work can take place;
 - (ii) to provide academic guidance;
 - (iii) to facilitate and assess progress;
 - (iv) to facilitate administrative compliance;
 - (v) to guide the candidate into wider contacts and opportunities as appropriate to the discipline;
 - (vi) to act as a guide to University facilities; and
 - (vii) to encourage the student to participate in University intellectual life.
- c) For more information see [Responsibilities of Academic Supervisors](#).

6.4 Responsibilities of the University supervisor 4.7.4

Note: Where the primary supervisor is a staff member at Victoria University of Wellington, they are automatically designated as the University supervisor. Where the primary supervisor is not a staff member another member of the supervisory team must be designated as the University supervisor and must be a staff member of Victoria University of Wellington.

In addition to the responsibilities in 6.3, the University supervisor is responsible for:

- a) overseeing the academic development of the candidate; and specifically
- b) ensuring that six-monthly reporting (CDP) is carried out;
- c) overseeing the movement from provisional to full registration;
- d) reading the final draft of the thesis (or where the primary supervisor is not a staff member of Victoria University of Wellington, ensuring that the final draft is read by an academic supervisor prior to submission);
- e) ensuring that examiners are nominated at least two months prior to submission.

6.5 External supervisors 4.7.5

- a) External supervisors are expected to meet the criteria specified in the Doctoral Regulations section 4.7.6 regarding the qualifications of academic supervisors.
- b) External supervisors are academic supervisors, with the responsibilities in section 6.3(b)(i)–(v) above.
- c) External supervisors, except those appointed under a co-tutelle agreement, must be appointed as [Honorary Research Associates \(HRA\)](#).
- d) Former academic staff members who have left Victoria University of Wellington but will be continuing to supervise doctoral candidates must be appointed as HRAs for the remaining length of candidature; this does not apply to those who have been appointed as a Victoria University of Wellington

Emeritus Professor. Adjunct staff members who are to supervise candidates must also be appointed as HRAs.

- e) Supervision arrangements for co-tutelle candidates are to be documented in the agreement and an HRA appointment is not necessary.
- f) By mutual agreement with the Deans and Directors of the universities, HRAs from another NZ University are not normally paid. For advice about other payment arrangements please contact HR. Payments are from School budgets.

6.6 Candidate's responsibilities

- a) Completing a doctoral programme requires progressive development of skills, competence and confidence. This includes:
 - (i) planning and actively pursuing the research;
 - (ii) identifying and dealing with problems;
 - (iii) complying with administrative requirements;
 - (iv) meeting ethical guidelines – this includes honesty in regard to data, which is dealt with under the Student Conduct Policy;
 - (v) giving three months notice of intention to submit;
 - (vi) taking responsibility for all aspects of the thesis as submitted for examination;
 - (vii) participating in University intellectual life.
- b) For more information see [Responsibilities of PhD Candidates](#).

6.7 Conflicts of Interest

Except with permission of the Dean FGR, members of the supervisory team must not have any conflicts of interest as defined by the [University's Conflicts of Interest Statute](#). See in particular 4.2(c). Disclosure of conflicts of interest with regard to doctoral thesis candidates must be made to the Head of School (who will disclose them to other decision makers in the School if appropriate) and to the Associate Dean (PGR), and prior approval must be obtained from the Dean FGR

7 Evaluation and feedback (Doctoral Regulations 4.9)

7.1 Progress reporting 4.9(a)

- a) PhD candidates are required to complete a Candidate Development Plan (CDP) in May and November of each year of registration. Candidates undertaking a professional doctorate need to do this in part 2 only, as progress is monitored during coursework in part 1.
- b) The CDP rounds are managed in an online process administered by the Wellington Faculty of Graduate Research.
- c) The timeframes for the candidates and supervisors to have completed the CDP process are:
 - For the May round 1–30 May
 - For the November round 1–30 November
- d) A key element of the CDP is the progress meeting between the candidate and supervisors. Ideally this will occur face-to-face, but video conferencing is also acceptable.
- e) Failure to complete a progress report within the timeframe will result in follow-up from the Dean FGR.
- f) Absence of a CDP will have implications for any requests for a suspension of study or an extension of time.

7.2 Resolving performance issues

- a) Where there are major or continuing problems with a candidate's performance, the CDP should specify what action needs to be taken to rectify the problems and stipulate a time period within which such action is to be taken.
- b) The School must offer the candidate the opportunity to respond and then will monitor the proposed actions. The School will also inform the candidate of their entitlement to representation, and the advisory and support services offered by VUWSA via the Student Advocate and the PGSA.
- c) Where difficulties may be addressed by a change to the supervisory team, refer to the [Procedures for Changes to Supervisory Arrangements](#).
- d) In the event that the candidate fails to take the required action so that problems persist, the School must notify the Associate Dean (PGR) who may then consider whether or not to recommend termination of the candidate's enrolment.

7.3 Feedback on progress

- a) In addition to the CDP process, supervisors will provide candidates with adequate and timely feedback and evaluation of their progress throughout their candidature. Feedback should be given using a format that provides the candidate with a permanent record on any written work submitted.
- b) Supervisors must keep a record of supervisory meetings and record any significant advice given or transactions not dealt with in the CDP. Keeping good records will also assist in preparing the CDP and attending the review meeting.

- c) If any doubt arises as to the ability of a candidate to complete the doctorate this must be raised and dealt with as soon as is practicable for the benefit of both the student and the University. Actions taken to address any concerns should be documented. See section 7.2 above.
- d) Candidates approaching submission of their thesis for examination will require detailed written feedback on draft chapters as they are completed. Supervisors should endeavour to provide feedback on the final draft of the thesis within four weeks.

8 Submission of the thesis for examination (Doctoral Regulations 4.10)

8.1 *Minimum registration*

- a) PhD candidates may apply to have the thesis examined any time after the minimum registration period of 36 months full-time (or equivalent). The minimum registration period for a professional doctorate is 24 months full-time (or equivalent) in Part 2.
- b) Candidates must be registered for the three months immediately preceding submission but may appeal to the Dean FGR to vary this requirement if there are exceptional circumstances. Appeals must be made in writing, with accompanying evidence, and supported by the supervisors.
- c) If a candidate wishes to submit the thesis for examination within the minimum registration enrolment period, they must be able to show that they have exceptional grounds for doing so, e.g., started their PhD at another University and have subsequently transferred to Victoria University of Wellington. Applications must be made in writing to the Dean FGR and must have the approval of the Associate Dean (PGR).

8.2 *Timeframe for submission*

- a) Candidates are expected to give three months' notice, to the University supervisor and the School, of their intention to submit. This is to allow sufficient time for the identification of suitable examiners.
- b) Candidates should allow for supervisor/s to take four weeks to read and comment on a final draft of the thesis.

8.3 *Supervisor approval*

- a) The candidate's decision to apply for the thesis to be examined must be made in consultation with the University supervisor.
- b) When the candidate submits the thesis, it must be accompanied by a statement from the University supervisor confirming that:
 - i. the candidate has pursued the course of study in accordance with the requirements of the PhD or professional doctorate Regulations and accompanying procedures; and
 - ii. the submission is made with the supervisors' approval.
- c) If the University supervisor cannot sign (ii), the matter must be referred to the supervisory team who will determine whether or not the thesis is ready for submission.
- d) Where the supervisory team's approval has not been given, the thesis must be returned to the candidate noting that the candidate is advised not to submit until the modifications indicated by the supervisory team have been made.
- e) Modifications that are required for any of the following reasons must be addressed by the candidate before the thesis can be sent out to the examiners:
 - (i) insufficient legibility, inadequate proof-reading, or grossly inadequate English;

- (ii) lack of an appropriate reference list/bibliography;
 - (iii) lack of an abstract;
 - (iv) lack of a table of contents;
 - (v) lack of any other necessary formal requirement of a thesis;
 - (vi) failure to comply with the Regulations on length of theses.
- f) Where there is dispute between the supervisory team and a candidate regarding the modifications above, the final decision lies with the Dean FGR
 - g) Once the obligatory modifications have been made, the candidate may choose to submit, or delay submission until any other points have been addressed.
 - h) If the readiness of the thesis for submission is in dispute, the Dean FGR may offer an independent internal scrutineer.

8.4 Application for examination

- a) Applications should be made on the [Application for Doctoral Examination form](#).
- b) Details of the format of the thesis to be submitted and other documents that must be submitted with the thesis are included in the Doctoral Regulations 4.10(g) and noted on the application form.
- c) Section 4.10(g)(iv) of the Doctoral Regulations does not preclude simultaneous submission to another University if there is a registered co-tutelle agreement in place.
- d) On submission of the thesis, the candidate's status will change from 'full registration' to 'under examination' (UX) and they are no longer required to pay tuition fees. Ongoing access to office space is by negotiation with the School while computer and library access and access to student services will continue as previously.
- e) At the time of submission for examination, candidates are given information about advance graduation. Refer to section 12.

8.5 Submission of the thesis 4.10

- a) Candidates will submit a PDF version of their thesis to FGR by email, through a file-sharing service such as SharePoint or Dropbox, or by bringing the PDF physically to FGR on a memory stick.
- b) Candidates are normally expected to attend a submission appointment at FGR in which the examinations team will check the PDF, will collect and check the paperwork, and will brief the candidate on the examination procedure.
- c) FGR acknowledges that some students will, exceptionally, need to submit a physical copy of the thesis, for example, certain architecture or creative theses may have a component that is not easily or appropriately delivered as a PDF. Physical submission requires written permission of Dean FGR, which permission will not be unreasonably withheld.

Note: See also Section 5.3 regarding the School's responsibility for ensuring that non-standard material is examinable and archivable.

9 Examiners (Doctoral Regulations 4.11)

9.1 Qualification of examiners 4.11(c)

The requirements to be an examiner are noted in the Doctoral Regulations section 4.11(d). The specific requirements for each of the three examiners are detailed in the following sections.

- a) Examiners for the PhD degree should:
 - i. have a PhD degree and/or an established research record; and
 - ii. be active researchers or scholars in the field of the thesis; and
 - iii. have no conflict of interest; and
 - iv. not have been the primary or co-supervisor of the thesis; and
 - v. normally be employed by a tertiary education institution
- b) Scholars or researchers who are not employed by tertiary education institutions, but by research, governmental or commercial organisations may be appointed as examiners provided they meet the criteria in (a)(i)–(iv) above.
- c) No two examiners will normally be employed by the same institution.

9.2 The internal examiner

In addition to the criteria in section 9.1 above the internal examiner:

- a) will normally be a professor, associate professor, senior lecturer or lecturer or equivalent-level researcher at Victoria University of Wellington;
- b) may be a former employee of the University resident in Wellington who is not employed at another tertiary institution;
- c) may be a person under contract with Victoria University of Wellington, e.g., as a tutor, post-doctoral fellow, part-time lecturer, provided that their main employment is not with another tertiary institution;
- d) must have no conflict of interest arising from work on the same site as the candidate, e.g., line manager, known antipathy, a former primary or co-supervisor;
- e) must not be enrolled as a PhD candidate in any university.

9.3 The New Zealand examiner

In addition to the criteria in section 9.1 above the New Zealand examiner:

- a) will normally be a professor, associate professor, senior lecturer or lecturer at another New Zealand tertiary education institution or recognised research institution;
- b) will be an active researcher;
- c) may be replaced by someone from Australia if there are good reasons for this.

9.4 The overseas examiner

In addition to the criteria in 9.1 above the overseas examiner:

- a) will normally be employed by a tertiary institution outside New Zealand;
- b) will normally have a good research record in the general area of the thesis;
- c) will be an active researcher in the specific field covered by the thesis;
- d) may be replaced by someone from New Zealand if the topic of the thesis concerns New Zealand and the main specialists in the area are in New Zealand.

9.5 Appointment of examiners

- a) It is the University supervisor's responsibility to suggest examiners and to provide sufficient information about the examiners to support their nomination.
- b) Nominations are to be made on the [Request for Approval of Doctoral Examiners](#) form.
- c) The Wellington Faculty of Graduate Research (FGR) requires a rationale for the appointment of each of the examiners (especially the two external examiners) and sufficient biographical and bibliographical information to support the rationale. This rationale must explain not only why the proposed examiners are competent, but why they are suited to the examination of the thesis in question, either individually or as a team.
- d) The School may require more than the minimum number of examiners to be nominated by the University supervisor, and make a selection from those proposed. If only the minimum number is nominated and any prove unsuitable, the University supervisor will be asked for further nominations.
- e) The School may have reasons to reject examiners that have nothing to do with their inherent suitability, and supervisors must not expect that their recommendations will always be accepted, though their recommendations should always be seriously considered.
- f) The candidate may be consulted about the choice of examiners but should not be informed as to who has been recommended or approved. The identity of the examiners will be available when the examination reports are released.
- g) The Dean FGR accepts School recommendations provided that the case is properly made and unless there are factors of which the School is unaware.
- h) Examples of reasons to reject an application are:
 - (i) the relevant forms are incomplete;
 - (ii) a proposed examiner is not an active researcher or scholar;
 - (iii) a proposed examiner has proved unreliable in the past;
 - (iv) a proposed examiner has already undertaken several examination tasks in a short period;
 - (v) sufficient justification of the examiners' appropriateness for the specific thesis is not provided;
 - (vi) a proposed examiner does not meet the criteria outlined in the Doctoral Regulations 4.11(d).
- i) Prospective examiners should be approached informally by the School well in advance of the expected submission of the thesis to confirm that they are willing to examine and able to complete the examination of the thesis in the expected timeframe of eight weeks.

- j) Examiners will be advised of the expected date of the oral defence when they receive the thesis for examination.
- k) Each examiner's report must be independent and submitted directly to the Dean FGR. Examiners should not be in contact with other examiners, the candidate or the supervisors prior to the oral defence. If any contact is necessary, this should only be through the FGR.

10 Examination process (Doctoral Regulations 4.12)

10.1 Examination of the thesis 4.12.1

- a) The outcomes available to examiners are stated in the Doctoral Regulations section 4.12.1.
- b) Where the examiners disagree markedly in their recommendations, the Dean FGR may:
 - (i) allow the oral to proceed in the expectation that examiners will resolve the disagreement in the course of the examination process; or
 - (ii) send the 'anonymised' versions of the examiners' reports to all examiners and facilitate discussion about the outcome in order to arrive at a common recommendation; and/or
 - (iii) appoint a referee who will adjudicate on the merits of the opposing points of view. Referees are appointed in the same way as examiners (refer to the Doctoral Regulations section 4.11); and/or
 - (iv) undertake such other consultation as may be considered necessary to determine an appropriate outcome.
- c) Where the examiners agree that the written thesis is substandard with respect to the requirements of the doctoral degree, rather than approving the candidate's move to an oral defence, the Dean FGR may recommend that the candidate:
 - (i) revise and resubmit the thesis for second examination; or
 - (ii) accept the award of a Master's degree (subject to minor changes that may be required to the thesis); or
 - (iii) be awarded no degree.
- d) A recommendation in (c) above will only be made after discussion with the examiners. The same options are available as an outcome of the oral defence, with the proviso that a candidate may only revise and resubmit the thesis once.
- e) The candidate may decline any of the options in (c) above and assert their right to have an oral.
- f) Where necessary, and according to FGR Board procedures, the Dean FGR will consult with other relevant and appropriate parties to resolve examination issues.
- g) Where a referee is used, the Dean FGR may request that the referee be present at the oral defence, along with the other examiners or as a replacement for one of the examiners.
- h) The candidate may request to waive the right to five clear working days between receipt of the examiners' reports and the oral defence, provided this is done in writing using the waiver to receive examiners' reports form, which will be provided to affected candidates by FGR.
- i) If an examiner has reason to suspect that a thesis under examination contains material that is plagiarised, or believes that there has been a failure to secure appropriate ethics approval, or considers that some other form of academic

misconduct has occurred, they should immediately raise the matter, in confidence, with the Dean FGR.

10.2 The oral defence of the thesis 4.12.2

- a) The internal examiner is expected to attend the oral examination in person. The New Zealand examiner is expected to attend either in person or by video-conference. The overseas examiner is not normally required to attend and will submit questions that will be put to the candidate by one of the examiners attending the oral.
- b) The oral will begin with the candidate being offered the opportunity to speak for 10–15 minutes. They may use this time to provide an overview of the research, explaining briefly the major contribution made in the thesis, and to respond to the key points made by the examiners in their written reports. However, they must not come with a pre-prepared written rebuttal of the points made by the examiners. Candidates are expected to engage in dialogue with the examiners and to defend their thesis orally.
- c) If the candidate is not on site at Victoria University of Wellington for the oral defence, the following conditions must be met:
 - (i) the candidate must be located at a tertiary education institution; and
 - (ii) a responsible person from that institution must be available to confirm that the candidate is answering the questions independently.
- d) Candidates must make application to the Dean FGR for permission to attend the oral via video conference. Approval is a three-step process and final approval cannot be given until the Dean FGR has considered all of the examiners' reports. Further information is available from the Doctoral Examinations Team.
- e) The examiners will (and the Chair may) ask questions of the candidate relating to the thesis, matters raised in the written reports on the thesis and related matters in the field or fields to which the thesis belongs.
- f) A supervisor should not take part in the discussion between candidate and examiners. However, with the permission of the Chair, a supervisor may question the candidate or provide clarification. Any supervisor who interrupts without the permission of the Chair may be asked to leave the oral.
- g) When there are no more questions, the Chair will ask the candidate whether they wish to make any concluding remarks. After this, the Chair will request the candidate, supporters and observers to leave. The supervisor/s attending may make a statement to the examination committee regarding aspects of the examination if they wish and will answer any questions of clarification from the examination committee.
- h) Before the committee discusses the outcome of the examination, the supervisor/s will leave.
- i) With the agreement of the Chair and the examiners a candidate may elect for the proceedings of the oral defence, prior to the candidate leaving the room, to be audio-recorded. Any audio recording will be arranged by the examinations team in FGR.

10.3 Examination outcome

- a) The possible outcomes from the complete examination process (i.e. examination of the thesis and the oral defence of the thesis) are detailed in the Doctoral Regulations section 4.13.
- b) After the examination committee members have decided on the recommendation they will make to the Dean FGR, the Chair will inform the candidate of the recommendation.
- c) If the recommended outcome is that the candidate can be awarded the degree subject to completing the required revisions, he or she can expect to receive the written report within three days. If that has not been the recommended outcome, the Chair should inform the candidate when a decision can be expected and who will communicate it.
- d) A timeframe for making corrections and amendments to the thesis will also be indicated by the examination committee and should not exceed six months.
- e) The timeframe for making corrections is primarily intended to indicate the scale of work involved rather than reflect a candidate's other commitments.
- f) Corrections and amendments that are expected to take longer than six months to complete will normally result in a revise and resubmit decision.
- g) Requests for extensions to the specified timeframe should be made to the Dean FGR.
- h) See section 2.2(j) above regarding the word limit on a thesis that is either corrected and amended or revised and resubmitted for second examination.

10.4 Distribution of the thesis to examiners

- a) Examiners will be sent an electronic copy of the thesis.
- b) Where physical media other than the thesis have been submitted, examiners will be sent such material as can be shipped at reasonable cost.

Note: Any issues regarding examining non-standard material will have been satisfactorily resolved by the SRC at the time of transition from provisional to full registration (see Section 5.3).
- c) Where the thesis is embargoed prior to submission for examination, examiners will be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement.
- d) When the result of the examination has been finalised, all examiners should delete their electronic copy and destroy any hard copy that they have made.
- e) Where an examiner has made annotations for the candidate on a copy of the thesis, either electronically or on a hard copy, it should be given to the candidate in a timely fashion.

11 Revisions process (Doctoral Regulations 4.13)

11.1 Corrections and amendments 4.13.2

- a) The responsibility for overseeing corrections and amendments to a thesis belongs in the School.
- b) The School has the power to establish an *ad hoc* committee for the purposes of overseeing the corrections and amendments where this may be useful, e.g., in cases of interdisciplinary theses, or to give junior staff experience in this area.
- c) In most cases it will be sufficient for one person to oversee the corrections and amendments and sign off on the School approval of PhD thesis corrections and amendments form. That person will normally be the internal examiner, but may be another person if, for example, (a) the internal examiner is absent from Wellington or (b) the internal examiner was the harshest critic of the thesis.

Note: The "School approval of PhD thesis corrections and amendments" form will be sent by FGR to those who need to complete it.

- d) Candidates do not determine what corrections and amendments must be made; that is the job of the examiners, who make their expectations known to the candidate and to the School via the final written examination report. Failure to complete all required revisions to an acceptable standard will lead to failure of the examination and no qualification will be awarded.
- e) Examiners may also make suggestions that, while not required for the award of the degree, may provide for improvements to the thesis. Candidates are permitted to make modest revisions in line with these suggestions but are not at liberty to otherwise revise their thesis. The thesis that is deposited in the library must be the thesis that has been examined, subject to these revisions.
- f) Once a timeframe for completing corrections and amendments is established, candidates are expected to adhere to it, although there is provision to request an extension from the Dean FGR using the Request for extension to complete PhD thesis corrections and amendments form.

Note: The "request for extension to complete PhD thesis corrections and amendments" form will be sent by FGR to those who need to complete it.

- g) If a candidate does not re-present the thesis within the timeframe and has not requested an extension of time, their enrolment will lapse and their candidature may be terminated.

11.2 Revise and resubmit for a second examination 4.13.1

- a) The process is outlined in the Doctoral Regulations section 4.13.1.
- b) The minimum period of re-registration is six months full-time (or equivalent). The expected maximum time is 12 months full-time or 18 months part time, subject to the approval of the examination committee.
- c) To achieve a timely completion and to ensure that a candidate is well supported during the revisions to the thesis, the following are required:
 - a. Re-registration within 3 months; and
 - b. Any periods of suspension to be approved by the Dean FGR; and

- c. Supervisors will provide brief reports at three monthly intervals, using a specific reporting form instead of the standard CDP. The request for such reports will be generated from the FGR.

12 Graduation (Doctoral Regulations 4.14 (b))

12.1 Advance graduation

- a) At the time of submission for examination, candidates are given information about [advance graduation](#).
- b) An application for advance graduation ensures that a place is held for the candidate in anticipation of them successfully completing the examination process, lodging the final copy of the thesis in the University Library and having the award of the degree approved by the Dean FGR. Final deadlines for completing all requirements in order to attend a graduation ceremony are determined by the Graduation Office and are non-negotiable.
- c) Doctoral candidates should return their application forms to the Candidature Management Administrator in the Wellington Faculty of Graduate Research by the appropriate deadline: 1 March (for May ceremonies) and 1 October (for December ceremonies).

12.2 Graduation in absentia

- a) For further information regarding graduation, including graduation in absentia, refer to <https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/students/graduation-and-beyond/graduation>

13 Appeals (Doctoral Regulations 4.4.3 (f) and (g))

- a) An appeal relating to termination of enrolment due to non-payment of fees or failure to complete examination requirements may be made to the Dean FGR.
- b) An appeal relating to termination of enrolment due to a candidate not meeting the requirements to move from provisional to full registration, or not maintaining satisfactory progress, may be made to the Vice-Provost (Research).
- c) Appeals must be made in writing and lodged within 20 days of being notified of the decision.
- d) Any concerns relating to academic disadvantage regarding a candidate's doctoral programme are dealt with under the [Academic Grievance Policy](#).
- e) In accordance with that Policy, any concerns regarding a doctoral programme are, in the first instance, to be dealt with through an informal process. The matter should initially be raised with the supervisor/s or the Postgraduate Co-ordinator, and then, if necessary, with the Head of School, Associate Dean (PGR) and the Dean FGR.
- f) If the informal process fails to satisfactorily resolve the matter, the candidate may submit a formal academic grievance as set out in the Academic Grievances Policy.