PhD Procedures

Introduction

These procedures give effect to the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy Statute (PhD Statute) and the Doctoral Policy and should be read in conjunction with those documents.

Unless otherwise stated:

- The reference numbers in the sub-headings relate to the relevant sections in the Doctoral Policy.
- Where reference is made to a “School Committee”, such a committee may alternatively be constituted at programme or faculty level, depending on the requirements of the academic structures concerned.
- Where reference is made to “School” the delegated authority is according to the procedures operating in the individual School.

1.0 Admission to the degree (Doctoral Policy 4.1)

The admission requirements are detailed in the PhD Statute section 4.1.

1.1 Application process 4.1(b)

a) Application for admission is handled centrally by the Faculty of Graduate Research (FGR). The process is combined with applications for Victoria Doctoral Scholarships.

b) All applications must be made on the official application form available at http://www.victoria.ac.nz/fgr/prospective-phds/applying.aspx

c) Applications are considered three times per year following 1 March, 1 July and 1 November closing dates for applications.

d) Applicants are not required to identify a potential supervisor prior to making an application, although they may do so if they wish and they may have preliminary discussions with School staff. However, individual supervisors may not give any undertaking of acceptance into the programme and all applicants must be advised that applications are made through the FGR.

e) 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. Candidates will develop a full research proposal during the period of provisional registration.

f) Full information for applicants is on the FGR website (see link above).
g) Administrative processes are detailed in the Student Administration Manual section 9.2.

1.2 Selection of candidates

a) A School Committee is responsible for scrutinising applications by a set date. Recommendations are confirmed by the home Faculty who will forward them to the Faculty of Graduate Research (FGR) by the due date.

b) An applicant will be offered a place when the School Committee recommends the applicant to the 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.

The recommendation will also state whether School or individual requirements such as coursework are necessary.

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

c) The home Faculty will provide a ranked list of applicants for consideration for scholarships by the Victoria Research Degrees Scholarships Committee.

d) The home Faculty will sign off that the offer is consistent with its managed enrolment policy.

1.3 Resources for postgraduate research

a) The University undertakes to provide all postgraduate research candidates with minimum resources as agreed in the Minimum Resources Agreement.

b) Candidates who require additional resources are expected to discuss and document an agreement with their supervisor/s within one month of enrolment as part of the Confirmation of PhD Provisional Registration. This 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.

2.0 Course of study (Doctoral Policy 4.2)

2.1 Previously published work 4.2(e)

a) Work published before enrolment for the PhD should not appear in extended verbatim form in the thesis, although the thesis may make reference to such work, as to any other published work, and may develop from such work.
b) Work that is accepted for publication during the period of supervision may appear verbatim, although it may be valuable to edit it for the thesis to avoid undue repetition.

2.2 The 100,000 word limit 4.2(f)

a) The 100,000 word limit is a maximum not a target. It is imposed by Statute. Refer to section 4.2 (e) of the PhD Statute.

b) However, it is acknowledged that some theses, in the fields of creative writing or translation may have specific reasons to exceed the 100,000 word limit. In such cases the candidate and supervisor/s must make the case for exemption in writing to the Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Research (FGR) no later than at the time of transition from provisional to full registration.

c) The word limit includes ‘everything that the examiner needs to read’ and is calculated electronically using the word count function. The “scholarly apparatus” referred to in the PhD Statute includes 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 b) 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 in the 100,000 words.

e) A check on the word limit is included in the Six-monthly Progress Report as a reminder to regularly review the scope of the research project.

f) Permission to exceed the limit will be considered only in exceptional circumstances. The breadth or depth of the study undertaken does not constitute an exceptional circumstance.

g) Requests to exceed the length requirements of the PhD must be made on the Permission to exceed 100,000 word limit for PhD thesis form.

h) The candidate should send the completed form, with a statement of support from the supervisor/s, to the Dean FGR as far in advance of submission of the thesis for examination as possible.

i) If the examination process results in corrections and amendments, or revise and resubmit for a second examination, the 100,000 word limit will be deemed to apply unless the examiners explicitly affirm that the limit may be exceeded.

2.3 Withholding access to a thesis 4.2(g)

a) Theses are public documents and are made available through the Victoria Library.

b) The withholding of theses is subject to the Withholding of Theses Procedure and to section 4.12.3(c) of the Library Statute.

c) The maximum period a thesis may be withheld is two years. If candidates believe that the two year embargo is likely to be insufficient, they, in
consultation with their supervisor/s should seriously consider reviewing the content of the thesis.

d) Permission to embargo a thesis from the public domain must be made on the Request to withhold access to a thesis or research paper form and submitted to the Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Research (FGR) well before submission of the thesis for examination.

e) Where a thesis is embargoed prior the thesis being submitted for examination, the examiners will be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement.

f) If, as a result of the examination process, the matter of withholding arises after submission of the thesis for examination, 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.

3.0 Enrolment (Doctoral Policy 4.3)

Conditions of enrolment 4.3.1

Except for any approved periods of suspension, a candidate is required to be continuously enrolled and to pay fees from first enrolment until submission of the thesis for examination.

The first period of enrolment is from a candidate’s start date until 31 December of the first year. Candidates are automatically re-enrolled each year on 1 January for a further 12 months until the year in which they expect to submit the thesis for examination when they may elect to re-enrol for three, six or nine months.

Changes to enrolment 4.3.2

3.1 Conversion from Master’s by thesis to PhD Degree 4.3.2(a)

A student who has not submitted their Master’s thesis for examination may apply to convert their enrolment from a Master’s thesis degree into a PhD degree. A conversion must occur before the Master’s thesis is submitted and must be finalised within 11 months of enrolment for the thesis; exceptions require the approval of the relevant Associate Dean (PGR).

a) 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.

b) Supervisor/s must:

(i) indicate 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.
c) 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.

d) 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.

e) 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.

f) Final approval of the conversion is by the relevant Associate Dean (PGR).

g) The candidate is not required to fill in a PhD Admission form. Application information and approvals are recorded on School/Faculty PhD Approval Form - upgrade from Master’s. Applications may be considered outside of the three standard application rounds.

h) If candidates wish to be considered for a Victoria PhD Scholarship they must complete the Victoria PhD Scholarship form for consideration in a subsequent round.

i) The date of first enrolment for the Master’s degree becomes the date of provisional registration for the PhD.

j) Candidates who convert from a Masters degree to a PhD are required to satisfy all requirements for full registration (see section 5.0).

3.2 Conversion from a PhD to a Master’s by thesis 4.3.2(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) 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 administrative supervisor and academic supervisors is also needed, as is the agreement of the candidate.

c) 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).

d) Where the candidate is a scholarship holder, the School must advise the Scholarships Office of the candidate’s change in circumstances.

e) No change is made to the candidate’s fees until their fees are next assessed. From that point, the relevant Master’s fees will apply.

f) Where a Master’s degree is awarded as an outcome of the PhD examination process (refer to Doctoral Policy 4.13 (b) (iii)), as determined by the Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Research, this is processed as per the Student Administration Manual, section 9.

### 3.3 Suspension of study 4.3.2(c)

a) Applications are to be made on the relevant form available from the home Faculty Office.

b) The reasons for suspensions are typically personal, and may include pregnancy and childbirth, protracted illness on the part of the candidate or a close relative, and requirements from employers. Wherever possible, applications should be made in advance.

c) Short-term absences from the University, such as annual leave (up to a total of four weeks,) statutory holidays, conference attendances, academic meetings and short-term illness can be noted on the candidate’s file, but do not constitute grounds for a suspension of study.

d) 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

   (ii) a statement from the primary supervisor indicating support or otherwise of the suspension

   (iii) the candidate’s latest six-monthly progress report.

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) Periods of suspension will affect eligibility for a Doctoral Completion Award.

g) International candidates who intend to suspend their enrolment for more than three months need to be aware that this may have implications for
their student visa and should contact the Visa Officer at Victoria International for advice.

h) Candidates may request a period of suspension from their studies provided the period requested is a whole number of calendar months and the period requested does not exceed 12 calendar months.

i) The approval of the Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Research is required for applications which:
   (i) take the period of suspension beyond 12 months in total during a candidacy, or
   (ii) request a retrospective suspension.

j) The Associate Dean (PGR) in the home Faculty may approve any other requests for suspension.

k) Particularly good grounds and evidence will be required for a retrospective suspension as a candidate will already have used University resources and services for the relevant period e.g. supervision, use of a room and computer facilities or scholarship payments. An application for a retrospective suspension should be made as soon as possible (within two months) after the event which gives rise to the claim for a retrospective suspension.

l) Where an application is declined, the candidate may continue with the period of enrolment or withdraw from the degree.

3.4 Extension to due date 4.2(h) & 4.3.2(d)

a) Applications for extensions are to be made on the relevant form available from the home Faculty Office and approved by the Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Research.

b) The reasons for being awarded extensions are typically personal, and may include pregnancy and childbirth, protracted illness on the part of the candidate or a close relative, and requirements from employers.

c) Any application for an extension requires a justification and evidence of planning for the completion of the thesis. Repeat requests for extensions, without significant evidence of progress, may be declined and the candidate’s enrolment may be terminated.

d) Extensions must be requested in whole calendar months and no more than 12 months extension will be approved at any one time.

e) Extensions which take the time under supervision beyond seven years will not be sympathetically received.

3.5 Change of status from full-time to half-time enrolment or from half-time to full enrolment 4.3.2(e)

a) Applications must be approved by the Associate Dean (PGR) who may require supporting documentation.
b) Relevant grounds for half-time enrolment may include the physical or psychological health of the candidate or a member of the candidate's immediate family, or the demands of full-time employment.

c) Scholarship holders who are contemplating a change of enrolment status must consider the conditions of their scholarship. Victoria Doctoral Scholarships require candidates to be enrolled full-time.

### 3.6 Termination of enrolment 4.3.2(f)

a) Where the Associate Dean (PGR) approves a School Research Committee recommendation to terminate a candidate’s enrolment, the decision and the reasons for the decision must be formally communicated to the candidate in writing. If the candidate cannot be given the letter in person it should be sent to the last known address and/or the University email address.

b) 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 any fees paid in advance of that date refunded (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.

c) Where candidates have not paid their fees and do not make contact with the home Faculty Student Advisor, within the specified timeframe, their candidature will be terminated.

d) Where, as a result of the examination process, a candidate is required to make corrections and amendments, they are not required to pay fees, but will be using University resources. It is important therefore that they represent the thesis within the specified time frame and/or maintain contact with the School; failure to do so will result in termination of the candidature.

e) Candidates whose registration is terminated under section 4.3.2 (f) (iii) or (iv) of the Doctoral Policy have the right of appeal to the Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Research.

### 3.7 Withdrawal from the programme 4.3.2(g)

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 other alternatives such as suspending study for a period or converting to a Master's degree.

### 4.0 Attendance at the University (Doctoral Policy 4.4)

#### 4.1 Definition of attendance

a) Victoria does not have any official option to undertake a PhD by distance study, and all PhD candidates are treated as though they are working on
b) For the purposes of this section, attendance at the University includes:
   (i) attendance at some other institution in the Wellington area at which supervision is available for the candidate
   (ii) attendance at an overseas university under a co-tutelle arrangement. Refer to the Guidelines for Co-tutelle PhDs at Victoria
   (iii) regular breaks such as annual leave (of up to four weeks in total), 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.

4.2 Duration of absence from the University

a) Government requirements mean that international candidates studying for a PhD in New Zealand are limited to 12 months total absence during the PhD, 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 Agreement on absence from the University

a) If a candidate is to work away from the University, the School will develop an agreement for absence from the University with the candidate.

b) The following points may be considered in developing an agreement:
   (i) a required period of preparation within the University before the candidate departs for periods of data collection etc
   (ii) an arrangement for regular contact by email or other means
   (iii) a required period of writing-up within the University before submission of the thesis
   (iv) contributions from the candidate to seminars etc while the candidate is working within the University
   (v) the extent to which the Minimum Resources Agreement applies
   (vi) any risks associated with candidates working overseas that would prevent timely completion, such as loss of data, ill
health or travel delays and how any risks might be mitigated.

c) A template Application to undertake PhD Research away from Victoria is available on the FGR website.

d) Scholarship holders must provide the Scholarships Office with a copy of the agreement.

5.0 Provisional and full registration (Doctoral Policy 4.5)

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 standards 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
meet any School or programme requirements developed by the School Research Committee and approved by the Associate Dean (PGR); and

meet any individual requirements imposed by the School.

b) 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).

c) Schools or programmes must publish information about their specific requirements in (ii) above. The requirements should also be discussed with enrolling candidates and included in School orientations or briefings for new PhD candidates.

d) 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 Dealing with Student Plagiarism and Related Academic Misconduct Procedure

5.3 Research proposal

As appropriate for the discipline and as published by the School, full research proposals should contain 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.

5.4 Presentation of the proposal

a) Where School or Programme procedures require candidates to present their proposal it is recommended that the presentation be publicly
announced (e.g. in VicNews) and be open to all staff and postgraduate students who may be interested.

b) Schools/programmes are free to determine the format of presentations. It is recommended that candidates summarise the proposal and highlight:

- key issues
- the conceptual framework
- the intended methodology
- any problems anticipated in carrying out the research.

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 Faculty Student Advisor or delegated School administrator will run a monthly report from ResearchMaster and alert the administrative supervisor and the candidate that the registration date is approaching.

b) Applicants are required to meet all applicable criteria in section 5.2 above.

c) 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.

d) The SRC should determine:

   (i) that the candidate has sufficient knowledge and understanding of the research topic; and

   (ii) that the research proposal outlines an appropriate theoretical framework which will lead to a defensible thesis; and

   (iii) that the proposed research is original or adds value to existing knowledge; and

   (iv) 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

   (v) that where the School requires presentation of the proposal as a condition of moving to full registration, this has been satisfactorily completed; and

   (vi) that any other School/programme requirements have been satisfactorily met; and

   (vii) that any necessary coursework (see Doctoral Policy 4.6) undertaken within the provisional registration period has been completed successfully and assessed at the required standard; and
(viii) 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) The School Research Committee (SRC) may consider the following recommendations:
   
   (i) that the candidate's movement to full registration should be approved; or
   
   (ii) that the research proposal should be revised and resubmitted; 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 all the criteria outlined in section 5.5 (d) above are met, the SRC will recommend that full registration be confirmed.

c) Where the recommendation is that the proposal be revised and resubmitted:
   
   (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 PhD study.
   
   (ii) The SRC will provide clear written feedback to the candidate regarding what is required to meet the requisite standards and will specify a timeframe in 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, as per Statute, is three months (full-time equivalent).

d) Where the recommendation is to convert to a Master's by thesis degree the processes in section 3.2 above will apply.

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. The candidate should also receive the decision in writing.
   
   (ii) The candidature is terminated by the Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Research on the advice of the Associate Dean (PGR).
f) The SRC will make a recommendation on the outcome of the application to the Associate Dean (PGR) using the [Movement from Provisional to Full PhD Registration SRC Report](#) form.

### 6.0 Supervision (Doctoral Policy 4.7)

#### 6.1 Qualifications of academic supervisors

a) The qualifications of academic supervisors are detailed in the Doctoral Policy section 4.7.6.

b) A primary supervisor must have at least 12 months experience of supervising doctoral candidates at Victoria or another university, or have successfully supervised Master's by thesis students to completion. At the discretion of the Head of School, more experience of supervision may be required.

#### 6.2 Responsibilities of the administrative supervisor 4.7.2

The administrative supervisor is responsible for ensuring that:

a) 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 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:
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 Victoria supervisor 4.7.4

The Victoria supervisor is responsible for:

a) overseeing the academic development of the candidate; and specifically
b) ensuring that six-monthly reporting is carried out
c) overseeing the movement from provisional to full registration
d) reading the final draft of the thesis
e) ensuring that examiners are nominated in a timely manner.

6.5 External supervisors 4.7.5

a) External supervisors have the same responsibilities as academic supervisors - see section 6.3 (b) (i) to (v) above - and need to be appointed as Honorary Research Associates (HRA).
b) External supervisors are also expected to meet the criteria specified in the Doctoral Policy section 4.7.6 regarding the qualifications of academic supervisors.
c) Former Victoria academic staff members who will be continuing to supervise Victoria PhD candidates need to be appointed as HRAs for the remaining length of candidature.
d) Adjunct staff members who are to supervise candidates must be appointed as HRAs.

6.6 Appointment of external supervisors as Honorary Research Associates 4.7.5(a)

Refer to the Faculty of Graduate website for information and an appointment form.

6.7 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.

6.8 Changes to the composition of the supervisory team 4.7.7

a) Refer to the Guidelines for changes to supervisory arrangements [link].
b) Changes to a candidate’s supervisory team must be approved by the Associate Dean (PGR) on the recommendation of the School Research Committee and notified using the Supervisory changes PhD Candidates form.

7.0 Evaluation and feedback (Doctoral Policy 4.9)

7.1 Six-monthly progress reporting 4.9(a)

a) Six-monthly progress reports are required in May and November in each year of enrolment as part of the postgraduate supervision process. The intention is that the supervisors and the candidate see and acknowledge each other's written comments (refer to the Six-monthly Progress Report template).
b) All fee-paying candidates are expected to complete a six-monthly progress report.
c) The home Faculty Office initiates the six-monthly reporting process of the candidates for whom they have responsibility, but the writing of the report is primarily the responsibility of the candidate and supervisors.
d) Any identified problems and proposed methods of addressing them should be discussed with the candidate before the report is finalised.
e) The final version of the six-monthly report, which has been agreed to and signed by candidate and supervisors, must be reviewed by the Head of School or delegate before being submitted to the Associate Dean (PGR). A copy must be provided to the student. The Scholarships Office will receive a copy of the progress report for scholarship holders.
f) Absence of a six-monthly report will have implications for requests for extensions and suspensions.
7.2 Resolving performance issues

a) Where there are major or continuing problems with a candidate’s performance, the six-monthly report 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 Advocates 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 take the action, upon the recommendation of the Administrative Supervisor, to terminate the student’s enrolment.

7.3 Feedback on progress

a) In addition to the six-monthly progress reports, 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 six-monthly reports. Keeping good records will also assist in preparing the six-monthly progress reports.

c) If any doubt arises as to the ability of a candidate to complete the PhD 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.

7.4 Candidates’ feedback 4.9(b)

On submission of the thesis for examination, candidates will be invited to complete an Exit Survey on Submission of Thesis questionnaire and return it to the Faculty of Graduate Research. Responses are confidential and the data is aggregated. Completed surveys are forwarded to the Associate Deans (PGR) once there are at least 10 completed surveys (with no fewer than four of either PhDs or Master’s Exit Survey forms).
8.0 Submission of the thesis for examination (Doctoral Policy 4.10)

1. Candidates may apply to have the thesis examined anytime after the minimum enrolment period (24 months full-time or 36 months half-time) provided they are enrolled for the three months immediately preceding submission using the Application for PhD examination form.

2. If a candidate wishes to submit the thesis for examination within the minimum enrolment period they must apply in writing to the Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Research (FGR) and must have the approval of the Associate Dean (PGR).

3. Candidates are expected to give three month’s notice, to the Victoria supervisor and the School, of their intention to submit. This is to allow sufficient time for the identification of suitable examiners.

4. Candidates should allow for supervisor/s to take four weeks to read and comment on a final draft of the thesis.

5. Candidates will submit the thesis to the FGR in electronic and hard copy formats.

6. When the candidate submits the thesis, it must be accompanied by a statement from the Victoria supervisor confirming that:
   
   (a) the candidate has pursued the course of study in accordance with the requirements of the PhD Statute and accompanying procedures; and

   (b) the submission is made with the supervisors’ approval.

7. If the Victoria supervisor cannot sign (b), the matter must be referred to the supervisory team who will determine whether or not the thesis is ready for submission.

8. 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.

9. 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:

   - insufficient legibility, inadequate proof-reading, or grossly inadequate English
   - lack of an appropriate reference list/bibliography
   - lack of an abstract
   - lack of a table of contents
   - lack of any other necessary formal requirement of a thesis
   - failure to comply with the policy on length of theses.
10. Where there is dispute between the supervisory team and a candidate regarding the modifications above, the final decision lies with the Dean FGR.

11. Once the obligatory modifications have been made, the candidate may choose to submit, or delay submission until any other points have been addressed.

12. If the readiness of the thesis for submission is in dispute, the Dean FGR will offer an independent internal scrutineer.

13. Details of the other documents that must be submitted with the thesis are included in the Doctoral Policy 4.10(e).

14. Section 4.10(e) (iv) of the Doctoral Policy does not preclude simultaneous submission to another University if there is a registered co-tutelle agreement in place.

15. Once the thesis is submitted, the candidate’s enrolment status will change from ‘full registration’ to ‘under examination’ and they will be entitled to the support accorded to other postgraduate research candidates, such as shared office space, computer and library access.

9.0 Examiners (Doctoral Policy 4.11)

9.1 Qualification of examiners 4.11(c)

The requirements to be a suitable examiner are noted in the Doctoral Policy section 4.11 (c). The specific requirements for each of the three examiners are detailed in this section.

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)-(iii) 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, co-author, a former member of the supervisory team

e) must not be enrolled as a PhD candidate in any university

f) will not necessarily be a subject specialist in a narrow sense, but will have some experience of the standards of presentation and argumentation required in a thesis.

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 Victoria supervisor's responsibility to suggest examiners and to provide sufficient information about the examiners to convince the School Research Committee that the appointments are wise ones.

b) Nominations are to be made on the Request for Approval of Examiners for the PhD form.

c) The 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 Victoria supervisor, and make a selection from those proposed. If only the minimum number is nominated and any prove unsuitable, the Victoria 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 at this stage as to who has been recommended or approved.

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 Policy 4.11 (c).

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.

10.0 Examination process (Doctoral Policy 4.12)

10.1 Examination of the thesis 4.12.1

   a) The outcomes available to examiners are stated in the Doctoral Policy section 4.12.1(a).
b) Where the examiners disagree fundamentally in their recommendations, the Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Research (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

(ii) ask for the appointment of 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 Policy section 4.11).

c) The tasks in (b) (ii) above may be delegated to the Associate Dean (PGR).

d) Cases of alleged plagiarism will be referred to the relevant home Faculty to be dealt with according to Faculty procedures. Refer to the Dealing with Student Plagiarism and Related Academic Misconduct Procedure.

e) Cases of alleged failure to secure appropriate ethics approval will be referred to the Convenor of the University Ethics Committee.

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 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.

10.2 The oral defence of the thesis 4.12.2

a) The New Zealand examiner is expected to attend the oral defence in person. The overseas examiner may be linked by teleconference or by videoconference and will submit questions for the candidate in writing to the FGR. The questions will be passed on to the Chair who will decide who puts the questions to the candidate.

b) The oral will always begin with the candidate being offered the opportunity to speak. Unless the oral is immediately preceded by a seminar, the candidate is expected to speak for 10-15 minutes, providing an overview of the research, explaining briefly the major contribution made in the thesis, and using the opportunity to respond to the key points made by the examiners in their written reports.

c) If the candidate is not on site at Victoria 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 Administrator.

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.

g) When there are no more questions, 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 deliberations of the examination committee, to be audio-recorded.

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 Policy section 4.13.

b)  After the examination committee members have determined the recommendation they will make to the Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Research (FGR), the Chair will inform the candidate of the recommendation.

c)  The candidate will also be informed about when he or she will receive the written report - in the case of recommended outcomes in the Doctoral Policy 4.13 (a) (i) and 4.13 (a) (ii) - or when a decision will be made and who will communicate it in the case of 4.13 (a) (iii).

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. Corrections and amendments that are expected to take longer than six months (full-time equivalent) to complete will normally result in a
revise and resubmit decision. Requests for extensions to the specified timeframe should be made to the Dean FGR.

e) See section 2.2 (i) above regarding the word limit on a thesis that is corrected and amended, or revised and resubmitted for second examination.

10.4 Distribution and return of copies of the thesis

a) Examiners should be offered the option of receiving an electronic copy of the thesis.

b) Where the thesis is embargoed, prior to submission for examination, examiners will be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement.

c) When the result of the examination has been finalised, all examiners should return their copies of the thesis and/or delete their electronic copy.

d) Where an examiner has annotated the thesis, it should be returned to the candidate in a timely fashion.

11.0 Revisions process (Doctoral Policy 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.

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. On the basis of the examination process, candidates may decide to make additional improvements to the thesis.

e) 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 of the Faculty of Graduate Research using the Request for extension to complete PhD thesis corrections and amendments form.

f) If candidates do not re-present the thesis within the timeframe and have not requested an extension of time, their enrolment will lapse.
11.2 Revise and resubmit for a second examination

The process is outlined in the Doctoral Policy section 4.13.1

12.0 Award of the degree (Doctoral Policy 4.14)

1. Candidates must meet the requirements outlined in the Doctoral Policy section 4.14 (a) before the degree can be awarded and they can be invited to graduate.

2. The candidate is responsible for depositing one print copy and one electronic copy of the thesis in the Victoria University Library and submitting a receipt of deposit to the Faculty of Graduate Research. For information regarding the deposit of the thesis in the University Library refer to http://www.victoria.ac.nz/library/about/policies/theses.html

3. For information regarding graduation refer to http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/viclife/events/graduation/default.aspx

13.0 Appeals

1. Appeals regarding termination of enrolment may be made to the Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Research (FGR) in the following situations (refer to the Doctoral Policy section 4.3.2 (f)):

   a) where a candidate has allowed their enrolment to lapse due to non-payment of fees; or

   b) where a candidate has failed to attend an oral defence of the thesis or failed to complete the required corrections and amendments within the approved timeframe without having sought an extension, or who fails to deposit a thesis in the University Library

2. Any concerns relating to academic disadvantage regarding a candidate’s PhD programme are dealt with under the Academic Grievances Policy.

3. In accordance with that Policy, any concerns regarding a PhD programme are, in the first instance, to be dealt with through an informal process. The matter should initially be raised with the supervisors or the Postgraduate Co-ordinator, and then if necessary with the Head of School, Associate Dean (PGR) and the Dean FGR.

4. 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.