



Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

Te Wāhanga Aronui

GUIDELINES FOR MASTER'S STUDENTS

0.1 PREFACE

Welcome to Victoria University, and in particular, a very warm welcome to the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences.

The Faculty has a strong research tradition across a wide variety of disciplines. We offer Master's programmes in a wide array of subjects as well as specialist degrees such as the Master of International Relations, Master of Museum and Heritage Studies, Master of Strategic Studies and Master of Theatre Arts. As a postgraduate student, you are an essential element in the continuation of this research tradition.

All New Zealand universities are assessed every six years by independent international panels to measure, and to rank, their research performance. In the most recent ranking, released in April 2013, Victoria University was placed first, significantly ahead of all other universities in New Zealand. All the subject areas in this Faculty were ranked very highly: in fact, we were either first or second in everything we do.

Completing a research degree can sometimes be a lonely experience. Becoming part of the postgraduate culture can help to reduce feelings of isolation, help you with your studies and build new friendships. So do make time to attend School and Faculty seminars and join the [Postgraduate Students Association](#).

Those of you who have already studied at Victoria will be well aware that our Wellington location provides plenty of opportunities to contribute to and participate in a range of cultural activities. If you are new to the city we encourage you to take advantage of all that the University and city have to offer.

We wish you enjoyment and success with your studies at Victoria.

Professor Deborah Willis

Dean, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

Associate Professor Paul Warren

Associate Dean (PGR), Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

0.2 AIMS OF THE GUIDELINES FOR MASTER'S STUDENTS

These *Guidelines* are intended as a reference for use by current and prospective Master's candidates and their Supervisors. The information contained in [Parts A](#) and [C](#) is relevant for all Master's Degrees offered by the [Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences](#), while [Part B](#) focuses on the major piece of research required for many of these degrees. In addition to consulting relevant sections of the *Guidelines* throughout the candidacy as required, candidates and Supervisors are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the *Guidelines* in their entirety as early as possible, in order to gain a better understanding of the complete Master's degree process.

0.3 TABLE OF CONTENTS

CONTENTS

| | |
|---|---|
| 0.1 Preface..... | 1 |
| 0.2 Aims of the Guidelines for Master's Students..... | 2 |
| 0.3 Table of Contents | 2 |

PART A

| | |
|---|----------|
| 1.0 Introduction | 8 |
| 1.1 Postgraduate Study and the University Community | 8 |
| 1.2 Values and Ethos | 8 |
| 1.3 Collegiality | 8 |
| 1.4 Appropriate Conduct in Research | 8 |
| 1.4.1 Plagiarism | 9 |
| 1.5 Staff Involved in the Management of Master's Degrees..... | 9 |
| 1.5.1 The Head of School..... | 9 |
| 1.5.2 The School Research Committee..... | 9 |
| 1.5.3 The Postgraduate Coordinator | 10 |
| 1.5.4 The Supervisor | 10 |
| 1.5.5 The Associate Dean (Postgraduate research)..... | 10 |
| 1.5.6 The Faculty Student and Academic Services Office..... | 10 |
| 1.5.7 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) | 11 |

| | |
|---|-----------|
| 1.5.8 The Faculty of Graduate Research..... | 11 |
| 1.6 Schools in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences..... | 11 |
| 1.7 Associated Centres, Institutes and Research Units | 12 |
| 1.8 Other Schools and Faculties Offering Subjects for the MA Degree | 14 |
| 2.0 The Master's Degree..... | 15 |
| 2.1 Master's Degrees Offered by the Faculty..... | 15 |
| 2.1.1 Master of Arts (MA)..... | 15 |
| 2.1.2 Master of Arts (Applied) (MA (Applied)) | 15 |
| 2.1.3 Master of Health Care (MHC)..... | 15 |
| 2.1.4 Master of Health Research (MHR)..... | 15 |
| 2.1.5 Master of International Relations (MIR) | 15 |
| 2.1.6 Master of Midwifery (MMidw)..... | 15 |
| 2.1.7 Master of Museum and Heritage Studies (MMHS) | 15 |
| 2.1.8 Master of Music (MMus)..... | 15 |
| 2.1.9 Master of Musical Arts (MMA)..... | 15 |
| 2.1.10 Master of Music Therapy (MMusTher) | 16 |
| 2.1.11 Master of New Zealand Studies (MNZS) | 16 |
| 2.1.12 Master of Nursing (MNurs) | 16 |
| 2.1.13 Master of Nursing Science (MNS)..... | 16 |
| 2.1.14 Master of Strategic Studies (MSS)..... | 16 |
| 2.1.15 Master of Theatre Arts (MTA) | 16 |
| 2.2 Courses of Study for Master's Degrees | 16 |
| 2.2.1 Coursework..... | 16 |
| 2.2.2 Cognate Requirements | 17 |
| 2.2.3 Research for Master's Degrees | 17 |
| 2.3 Enrolment Procedures..... | 17 |
| 2.3.1 Entry Requirements..... | 17 |

| | |
|--|-----------|
| 2.3.2 Formal Registration Requirements..... | 17 |
| 2.3.3 Enrolment and Payment of Fees | 18 |
| 2.3.4 Attendance at University and Study at a Distance | 18 |
| 2.4 Graduation..... | 18 |
| PART B | |
| 3.0 The Master’s Thesis | 19 |
| 3.1 Definition of a Master’s Thesis | 19 |
| 3.2 Flowchart Summary of Master’s by Thesis Process | 19 |
| 4.0 The Proposal | 21 |
| 4.1 Developing a Proposal | 21 |
| 4.2 Human Ethics Approval | 21 |
| 4.3 Animal Ethics Approval..... | 21 |
| 4.4 Confidential or Sensitive Material | 22 |
| 4.5 Collaborating Institutions | 22 |
| 5.0 Enrolment for the Master’s Thesis | 22 |
| 5.1 Enrolment Forms | 22 |
| 5.2 Duration of Enrolment..... | 23 |
| 5.3 Re-Enrolment..... | 23 |
| 5.4 Suspension of Enrolment..... | 23 |
| 5.5 Extension of Enrolment | 23 |
| 5.6 Conversion of a Master’s Degree to a PhD..... | 24 |
| 6.0 Supervision of the Master’s Thesis | 24 |
| 6.1 The Appointment of Supervisors..... | 24 |
| 6.1.1 The Appointment of an External Supervisor | 25 |
| 6.2 Changes to the Supervisory Team | 25 |
| 6.3 Supervisor Qualifications and Training..... | 25 |
| 6.4 Support for Supervisors..... | 26 |

| | |
|---|-----------|
| 6.5 The Supervisor’s Role and Responsibilities | 26 |
| 6.6 Evaluating the Progress of the candidate..... | 26 |
| 6.6.1 One-month Confirmation of Research Proposal Process..... | 26 |
| 6.6.2 Three- and eight-Month Progress Reports..... | 27 |
| 6.7 Evaluation of Research Supervision | 27 |
| 6.8 The candidate’s Role and Responsibilities | 27 |
| 7.0 Preparation and Submission of the Master’s Thesis..... | 28 |
| 7.1 Physical Appearance of the Master’s Thesis | 28 |
| 7.1.1 Citation style..... | 28 |
| 7.1.2 Suggested Layout of Title Page..... | 29 |
| 7.2 Decision to Submit the Thesis | 29 |
| 7.3 Giving Notice of Intention to Submit..... | 30 |
| 7.4 Submission of the Thesis | 30 |
| 7.4.1 Statement of Authorship..... | 31 |
| 7.4.2 Thesis Availability | 31 |
| 7.5 Exit Questionnaire | 32 |
| 8.0 Examination of the Master’s Thesis..... | 32 |
| 8.1 Appointment of Examiners..... | 32 |
| 8.2 Examination..... | 33 |
| 8.3 Results of the Examination Process..... | 33 |
| 8.3.1 Unconditional Acceptance of the Thesis | 33 |
| 8.3.2 Conditional Acceptance of the Thesis | 33 |
| 8.3.3 Call for Substantive Revision | 33 |
| 8.3.4 Failure | 34 |
| 8.4 Grades and Classes of Award | 34 |
| 8.5 Determination and Notification of Results..... | 35 |
| 8.6 Return of the Thesis after Examination..... | 36 |

| | |
|--|-----------|
| 8.7 Binding and Deposit of the Thesis | 36 |
| 8.7.1 Binding | 36 |
| 8.7.2 Depositing Your Thesis | 37 |
| PART C | |
| 9.0 Research Advice and Resources | 38 |
| 9.1 School Resources to Support Master’s candidates | 38 |
| 9.2 Information Technology Resources..... | 38 |
| 9.2.1 Working with Computers | 38 |
| 9.3 Student Learning Support Service | 39 |
| 9.4 Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences Website..... | 39 |
| 9.5 The University Library..... | 39 |
| 9.5.1 Lending Services | 40 |
| 9.5.2 Reference and Research Services..... | 40 |
| 9.5.3 Library Research Seminars | 40 |
| 9.5.4 Inter-Library Loan | 40 |
| 10.0 Financial Assistance | 40 |
| 10.1 Financial Support and Advice | 40 |
| 10.2 StudyLink | 41 |
| 10.3 University Scholarships..... | 41 |
| 10.4 Faculty Research Grants | 41 |
| 10.5 Externally-Funded Scholarships and Grants..... | 41 |
| 10.6 Employment within Schools | 42 |
| 11.0 University Student Services..... | 42 |
| 11.1 Postgraduate Liaison Officer | 42 |
| 11.2 Victoria International | 42 |
| 11.3 Student Support Services | 42 |
| 11.4 New to Vic Orientation..... | 43 |

| | |
|---|-----------|
| 11.5 Victoria University Students' Association..... | 43 |
| 11.6 Victoria University Postgraduate Students' Association | 43 |
| 11.7 PostgradLife..... | 44 |
| 12.0 Resolution of Problems..... | 44 |
| 12.1 General Principles of Dispute Resolution..... | 44 |
| 12.2 The Student Conduct Statute | 44 |
| 12.3 The Staff Conduct Policy..... | 45 |
| 12.4 Seeking Assistance from the Associate Dean..... | 45 |
| 12.5 Seeking Assistance from outside the Faculty | 45 |
| 12.6 Resolving Administrative Difficulties..... | 46 |
| 12.7 Formal Grievance Procedures | 46 |

PART A

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 POSTGRADUATE STUDY AND THE UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY

Postgraduate students represent a vital component of Victoria University's commitment to excellence in [research](#), and are expected to conduct themselves and their research in a manner that conforms to the values of the University and contributes to its academic goals. The University, for its part, endeavours to create and maintain a safe and academically stimulating environment for its postgraduates.

1.2 VALUES AND ETHOS

The Victoria University community strives at all times to achieve excellence in teaching, learning and research, while maintaining the highest possible standards of academic integrity. It is committed to ensuring that every student is given the opportunity to fulfil their academic potential, to promoting equity and to acting in accordance with the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

See also the [Student Charter](#).

1.3 COLLEGIALITY

The Faculty recognises that an important part of the postgraduate experience is the opportunity to interact with academic colleagues within a supportive and convivial learning environment. Postgraduate students will find that active participation in the intellectual life of their [Schools](#) is a useful way to forge social and academic bonds, and to lessen the isolation that students, particularly those of smaller Schools, may feel from time to time. Attendance at School research seminars is strongly encouraged and in some programmes compulsory.

1.4 APPROPRIATE CONDUCT IN RESEARCH

A Master's candidate is expected to conduct all research in an honest, academically responsible and ethical manner. The University treats academic misconduct extremely seriously and has provisions for dealing with such cases. Academic misconduct includes the fabrication or falsification of data, plagiarism (see below), the misleading ascription of authorship, the intentional infringement of guidelines released by the Human Ethics or Animal Ethics Committees, or any other research or academic practice that brings or is likely to bring the University into disrepute. Academic misconduct does not include honest errors or honest differences in the interpretation or conclusions drawn from collected data.

1.4.1 PLAGIARISM

Academic integrity means that university staff and students, in their teaching and learning are expected to treat others honestly, fairly and with respect at all times. It is not acceptable to mistreat academic, intellectual or creative work that has been done by other people by representing it as your own original work.

Academic integrity is important because it is the core value on which the University's learning, teaching and research activities are based. Victoria University's reputation for academic integrity adds value to your qualification.

The University defines plagiarism as presenting someone else's work as if it were your own, whether you mean to or not. 'Someone else's work' means anything that is not your own idea. Even if it is presented in your own style, you must acknowledge your sources fully and appropriately. This includes:

- Material from books, journals or any other printed source
- The work of other students or staff
- Information from the internet
- Software programs and other electronic material
- Designs and ideas
- The organisation or structuring of any such material

Find out more about [plagiarism](#), how to avoid it and penalties, on the University's website.

1.5 STAFF INVOLVED IN THE MANAGEMENT OF MASTER'S DEGREES

1.5.1 THE HEAD OF SCHOOL

The Head of School is responsible for approving arrangements for access to School facilities for Master's candidates, and for advising candidates about confirmation of their research proposal. The Head of School has ultimate authority within the School for postgraduate matters but will usually delegate these duties and functions to a Postgraduate Coordinator.

1.5.2 THE SCHOOL RESEARCH COMMITTEE

The School Research Committee (SRC) (or, in some Schools, the Postgraduate Committee) is the group within a School charged with advising the Head of School on research and postgraduate matters, including the confirmation of thesis research proposals.

1.5.3 THE POSTGRADUATE COORDINATOR

The Postgraduate Coordinator is the person to whom the Head of School has delegated the authority for postgraduate matters. Typically the Postgraduate Coordinator will take responsibility for the following areas:

- Discussing potential research projects with a candidate and making decisions about their suitability;
- Referring prospective candidates to possible Supervisors;
- Vetting initial research proposals in conjunction with the SRC;
- Overseeing acceptance of a candidate within a School;
- Keeping records and monitoring three- and eight-month progress reports;
- Liaising with the Associate Dean (Postgraduate) over progress;
- Providing advice and support for Supervisors;
- Responding to student queries and concerns, and
- Managing all administrative procedures relating to postgraduate studies in conjunction with School administration staff.

1.5.4 THE SUPERVISOR

A Supervisor is a member of staff who is appointed to provide academic and administrative guidance to the candidate before and during their enrolment for the degree.

1.5.5 THE ASSOCIATE DEAN (POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH)*

The person in each Faculty who is responsible for the decisions about all administrative and academic matters related to Master's Degree programmes, following advice from Supervisors, Heads of Schools, Postgraduate Coordinators and the Manager, Student and Academic Services. The Associate Dean also has an advisory role, and should usually be the first person to be approached with matters relating to supervision, funding and grievances not adequately resolved within the School.

* For the purposes of these *Guidelines*, Associate Dean will be the term used.

1.5.6 THE FACULTY STUDENT AND ACADEMIC SERVICES OFFICE

The [Student and Academic Services Office](#) within the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences is responsible for advising and implementing decisions made by the Associate Dean on the various administrative and academic aspects of Master's candidacy.

Murphy 411, Kelburn Parade, Kelburn Campus
PO Box 600, Wellington 6140
www.victoria.ac.nz/fhss/student-admin
+64 4 463 5745
fhss-enquiries@vuw.ac.nz

1.5.7 THE DEPUTY VICE-CHANCELLOR (RESEARCH)

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) assists and advises the Vice-Chancellor on matters relating to research within the University as a whole and chairs the University Research Committee.

1.5.8 THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE RESEARCH

The [Faculty of Graduate Research](#) (FGR) develops some policy relating to the Master's by thesis and monitors candidature and advises on and administers University and external scholarships and awards. The FGR does not administer Master's degrees by coursework, nor does it handle Master's by thesis enrolments or the ongoing administration related to extensions, suspensions, re-enrolment and the examination process. These are the responsibility of academic faculties and schools.

1.6 SCHOOLS IN THE FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

Art History, Classics and Religious Studies

www.victoria.ac.nz/sacr
+64 4 463 5807
sacr@vuw.ac.nz

English, Film, Theatre, and Media Studies

www.victoria.ac.nz/seftms
+64 4 463 6393
seftms@vuw.ac.nz

Graduate School of Nursing, Midwifery and Health

www.victoria.ac.nz/nmh
0800 108 005
nmh@vuw.ac.nz

History, Philosophy, Political Science and International Relations

www.victoria.ac.nz/hppi
hppi@vuw.ac.nz

History
+64 4 463 5344

Philosophy
+64 4 463 5368

Political Science and International Relations
+64 4 463 5351

Languages and Cultures

www.victoria.ac.nz/slc
+64 4 463 5293
slc@vuw.ac.nz

Linguistics and Applied Language Studies

www.victoria.ac.nz/lals
+64 4 463 5600
lals@vuw.ac.nz

Social and Cultural Studies

www.victoria.ac.nz/sacs
+64 4 463 5317
sacs@vuw.ac.nz

Te Kawa a Māui

www.victoria.ac.nz/maori
+64 4 463 5314
maoristudies@vuw.ac.nz

New Zealand School of Music

www.nzsm.ac.nz
+64 4 463 5369
info@nzsm.ac.nz

Va'aomanū Pasifika

www.victoria.ac.nz/pasifika
+64 4 463 5830
vaaomanupasifika@vuw.ac.nz

1.7 ASSOCIATED CENTRES, INSTITUTES AND RESEARCH UNITS

Adam Art Gallery

www.adamartgallery.org.nz
+64 4 463 5489
adamartgallery@vuw.ac.nz

Chair of Malay Studies

www.victoria.ac.nz/slc/study/subjectsoffered/mala
+64 4 463 5638
malaystudies@vuw.ac.nz

Centre for Strategic Studies

www.victoria.ac.nz/css

+64 4 463 5434

css@vuw.ac.nz

Deaf Studies Research Unit

www.victoria.ac.nz/dsru

+64 4 463 5600

lals@vuw.ac.nz

English Language Institute

www.victoria.ac.nz/eli

+64 4 463 5600

lals@vuw.ac.nz

International Institute of Modern Letters

www.victoria.ac.nz/modernletters

+64 4 463 6854

modernletters@vuw.ac.nz

New Zealand Contemporary China Research Centre

www.victoria.ac.nz/chinaresearchcentre

+64 4 463 9549

chinacentre@vuw.ac.nz

New Zealand Dictionary Centre

www.victoria.ac.nz/lals/research/nzdc

+64 4 463 5644

New Zealand India Research Institute

www.victoria.ac.nz/india-research

+64 4 463 5434

india-research@vuw.ac.nz

Stout Research Centre for New Zealand Studies

www.victoria.ac.nz/stout-centre

+64 4 463 5305

stout-centre@vuw.ac.nz

Treaty of Waitangi Research Unit

www.victoria.ac.nz/stout-centre/research-units/towru

+64 4 463 5305

stouttowru@vuw.ac.nz

Waiteata Press

www.victoria.ac.nz/wtapress

+64 4 463 5784

1.8 OTHER SCHOOLS AND FACULTIES OFFERING SUBJECTS FOR THE MA DEGREE

Economics and Finance (Economics and Economic History)

www.victoria.ac.nz/sef

+64 4 463 5708

sef@vuw.ac.nz

Faculty of Education (Education)

www.victoria.ac.nz/education/study/postgraduate

+64 4 463 5348

education@vuw.ac.nz

Engineering and Computer Science (Logic and Computation)

www.victoria.ac.nz/ecs

+64 4 463 5341

office@ecs.vuw.ac.nz

Geography, Environment and Earth Sciences (Geography)

www.victoria.ac.nz/sgees

+64 4 463 5337

geoenquiries@vuw.ac.nz

Information Management (Library and Information Studies)

www.victoria.ac.nz/sim

+64 4 463 5103

sim@vuw.ac.nz

Mathematics, Statistics and Operations Research (Mathematics, Mathematics Education)

www.victoria.ac.nz/smsor

+64 4 463 5341

office@msor.vuw.ac.nz

Psychology

www.victoria.ac.nz/psyc

+64 4 463 5280

psychology@vuw.ac.nz

School of Government (Public Policy)

www.victoria.ac.nz/sog

+ 64 4 463 6599

sog-info@vuw.ac.nz

2.0 THE MASTER'S DEGREE

2.1 MASTER'S DEGREES OFFERED BY THE FACULTY

2.1.1 MASTER OF ARTS (MA)

Available in [Applied Linguistics](#), [Art History](#), [Asian Studies](#), [Chinese](#), [Classical Studies](#), [Classics](#), [Creative Writing](#), [Criminology](#), [Cultural Anthropology](#), [Economic History](#), [Economics](#), [Education](#), [English](#), [Film](#), [French](#), [Geography](#), [German](#), [History](#), [International Relations](#), [Italian](#), [Japanese](#), [Library and Information Studies](#), [Linguistics](#), [Literary Translation Studies](#), [Logic](#), [Logic and Computation](#), [Māori Studies](#), [Mathematics](#), [Mathematics Education](#), [Media Studies](#), [Museum and Heritage Studies](#), [Music](#), [New Zealand Literature](#), [New Zealand Studies](#), [Pacific Studies](#), [Philosophy](#), [Political Science](#), [Psychology](#), [Public Policy](#), [Religious Studies](#), [Second Language Learning and Teaching](#), [Social Policy](#), [Sociology](#), [Spanish](#), [TESOL](#) and [Theatre](#).

2.1.2 MASTER OF ARTS (APPLIED) (MA (Applied))

No new intake from 2010.

2.1.3 MASTER OF HEALTH CARE (MHC)

www.victoria.ac.nz/nmh/prof-programmes/qualifications/nursing/mast-healthcare

2.1.4 MASTER OF HEALTH RESEARCH (MHR)

www.victoria.ac.nz/nmh/prof-programmes/qualifications/health/master-of-health-research

2.1.5 MASTER OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS (MIR)

www.victoria.ac.nz/hppi/study/postgraduate/mir

2.1.6 MASTER OF MIDWIFERY (MMidw)

No new intake from 2014.

2.1.7 MASTER OF MUSEUM AND HERITAGE STUDIES (MMHS)

www.victoria.ac.nz/sacr/study/postgraduate/museum-heritage-qualifications#masters

2.1.8 MASTER OF MUSIC (MMus)*

Available in Composition, Musicology and Performance.

www.nzsm.ac.nz/study-here/postgraduate-qualifications/master-of-music-mmus

2.1.9 MASTER OF MUSICAL ARTS (MMA)*

www.nzsm.ac.nz/study-here/postgraduate-qualifications/master-of-musical-arts-mma

2.1.10 MASTER OF MUSIC THERAPY (MMusTher)*

www.nzsm.ac.nz/study-here/postgraduate-qualifications/master-of-music-therapy

*Taught by Te Kōkī New Zealand School of Music.

2.1.11 MASTER OF NEW ZEALAND STUDIES (MNZS)

Not offered in 2014.

2.1.12 MASTER OF NURSING (MNurs)

No new intake from 2014.

2.1.13 MASTER OF NURSING SCIENCE (MNS)

www.victoria.ac.nz/nmh/prof-programmes/qualifications/nursing/master-nur-science

2.1.14 MASTER OF STRATEGIC STUDIES (MSS)

www.victoria.ac.nz/hppi/study/postgraduate/mss#master

2.1.15 MASTER OF THEATRE ARTS (MTA)

www.victoria.ac.nz/seftms/study/postgraduate/mta

2.2 COURSES OF STUDY FOR MASTER'S DEGREES

Courses of study for Master's Degrees consist of one or more of the following three models:

2.2.1 COURSEWORK

Master's Degrees offered in the FHSS that include advanced coursework are the MIR, MMA, MMusTher, MMHS, MSS and MTA.

An MA in one of the following subject areas *may* include advanced coursework: Classical Studies, English, International Relations, Library and Information Studies, Linguistics, Māori Studies, Mathematics, Modern Language Studies, New Zealand Literature, Political Science, Social Policy, Sociology, and Theatre.

The coursework option for the MA in Applied Linguistics or TESOL, or the MA in Second Language Learning and Teaching comprises advanced coursework or a combination of advanced coursework with a research project or dissertation.

Please note that most taught courses at Master's level are now available for enrolment via the Online Enrolment System.

2.2.2 COGNATE REQUIREMENTS

In some cases it may be necessary for a Master's candidate to undertake additional training in, for example, a foreign language, in order to undertake their course of study successfully. Prospective candidates in social science disciplines might consider whether one of the statistics courses available through the School of Mathematics, Statistics and Operations Research would provide a useful supplement to their research. Such training is not assessed as part of the Master's Degree and may attract additional fees.

2.2.3 RESEARCH FOR MASTER'S DEGREES

Most Master's Degrees will include the submission of a major piece of work that is the outcome of independent research, scholarship, and/or creative activity conducted under supervision. This piece of work – the 'thesis' – is the focus of [Part B](#) of these *Guidelines*.

2.3 ENROLMENT PROCEDURES

2.3.1 ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Before enrolment, a candidate for a Master's Degree will usually have completed an Honours Degree with First or Second Class Honours (or in some cases a Bachelors Degree), and been accepted by the relevant Head of School as capable of proceeding with the proposed course of study. Some programmes also have specific prerequisites. See the 'Courses of Study Statutes' section of the [University Calendar](#).

2.3.2 FORMAL REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

All applicants for a Master's Degree (except MA in Applied Linguistics, Creative Writing, Second Language Learning and Teaching or TESOL, MMA, MMus, MMusTher, MSS and MTA) must complete a Postgraduate Enrolment Application Form. This form is available on the [Faculty website](#) or from the Faculty Student and Academic Services Office.

Applicants for an MMA, MMus or MMusTher must complete a [Master's Degree by Thesis or with a Thesis Component Application Form](#), and an *application form for an NZSM Master's programme*.

Applicants for an MTA should refer to the guidelines for application given on the [School website](#).

Applicants for an MA in Applied Linguistics, Second Language Learning and Teaching or TESOL should refer to the application procedures on the [School website](#).

Applicants for an MA in Creative Writing should refer to the application procedures outlined on the [International Institute of Modern Letters website](#).

Applicants for a MMHS, MIR and MSS need to apply via the [Online Enrolment System](#).

Applicants for any Master's Degree with a thesis component worth at least 90 points must also complete an [Application for Master's Degree by Thesis or with a Thesis Component](#) (see also [Section 5.1](#)).

For additional information about enrolment (including application deadlines) see [Postgraduate Enrolment](#).

2.3.3 ENROLMENT AND PAYMENT OF FEES

Once their application has been processed, the candidate will be sent an *Offer of Study* by the Faculty Student and Academic Services Office and will be required to pay the necessary fees (tuition fees, Student Services Levy, Student Assistance Scheme and Amenities Levy). Enrolment is not complete until all fees have been paid. A thesis candidate is required to maintain their enrolment for the duration of their candidacy, which may require re-enrolment (see [Section 5.3](#)).

See the [Fees](#) page for information on current fees.

2.3.4 ATTENDANCE AT UNIVERSITY AND STUDY AT A DISTANCE

A Master's candidate is expected to maintain close contact with their School. Candidates and their Supervisors are expected to provide the Associate Dean with a rationale for a prolonged absence from the Wellington region, and give an assurance that regular contact will be maintained. Any variation to this requires the approval of the Associate Dean at the time of enrolment for the thesis or when circumstances change. If significant elements of the thesis project are to be undertaken off campus this must also be approved by the Associate Dean. Arrangements for maintaining regular contact with, and reporting to, the supervisor during approved periods away from the University must be agreed and clearly documented. A period of writing up prior to submission is expected to be carried out at the University prior to the submission of a thesis and normally a student would be enrolled for three months immediately preceding submission.

2.4 GRADUATION

Once a candidate has fulfilled all the requirements of the Degree for which he/she is enrolled, including the deposit of bound (and/or electronic) copies of the thesis to the library if applicable (see below), he/she is eligible to have the Degree conferred. See [Graduation](#) for information on the graduation process and academic dress hire.

PART B

3.0 THE MASTER'S THESIS

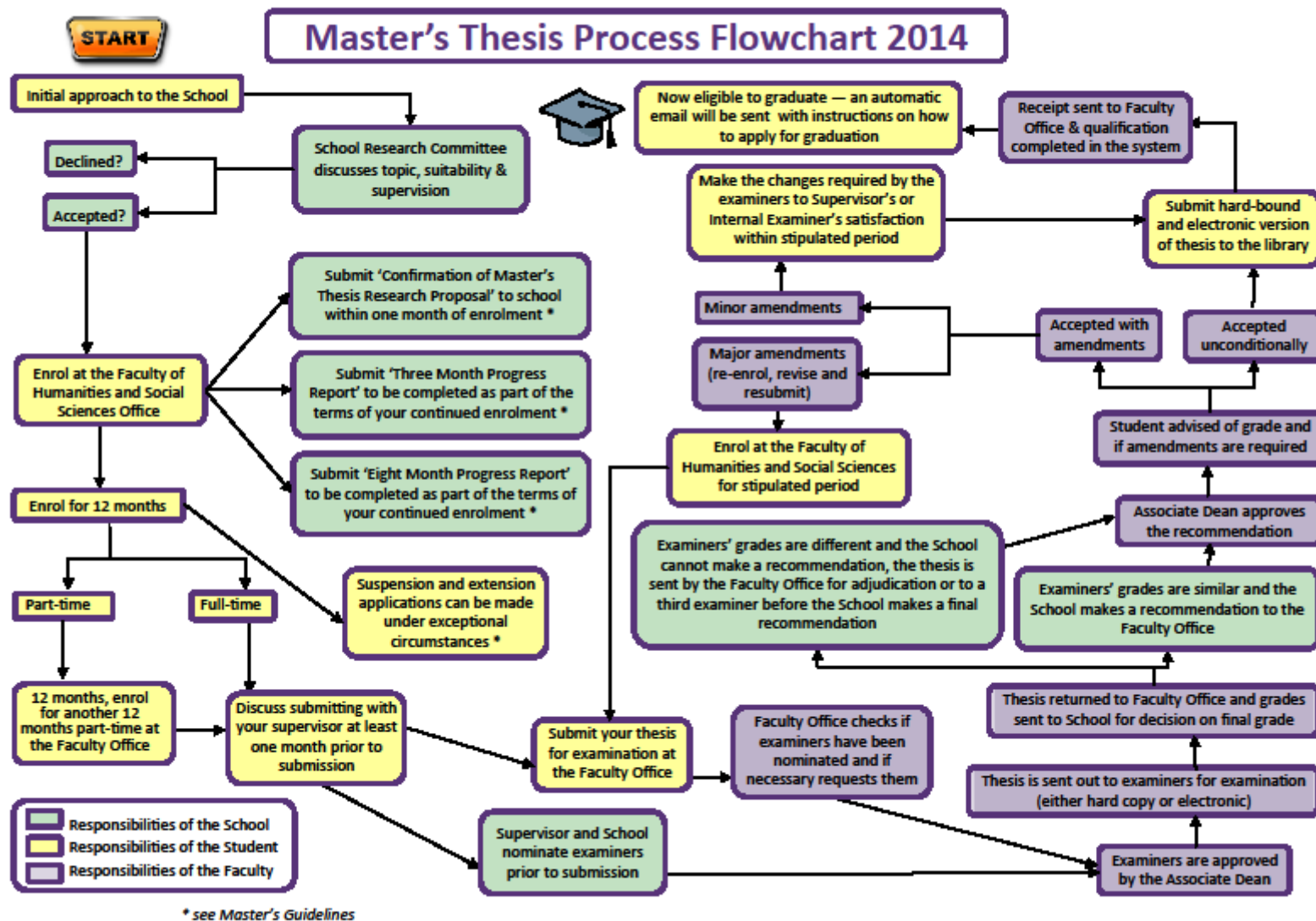
3.1 DEFINITION OF A MASTER'S THESIS

For most Master's candidates, the production of a major piece of work that is the outcome of independent research, scholarship, and/or creative activity conducted under supervision will be an integral part of the Degree programme. The University's [Master's Thesis Policy](#) defines a Master's thesis as having a value of 90 points or more, but students enrolled for a 60-point dissertation will also find this section useful.

Note: 60-point dissertations are not covered by the Master's Thesis Policy and are, therefore, considered to be postgraduate 'taught' courses. Administration processes related to these courses (e.g. grade entry, moderation, requests for extensions) will be those applied to taught courses, not those related to the administration of theses.

3.2 FLOWCHART SUMMARY OF MASTER'S BY THESIS PROCESS

The following provides a basic outline of the Master's by thesis process:



4.0 THE PROPOSAL

4.1 DEVELOPING A PROPOSAL

An applicant for a Master's thesis is required to produce a research proposal in consultation with their intended Supervisor. **This proposal should be a minimum of one page in length, and cover the aim of the project, methods of study, ethical considerations and resource requirements.** The proposal will then be considered by the Research Committee of the applicant's School, which will make a recommendation to the Head of School on the appropriateness of the proposal.

In making this recommendation, the Research Committee will consider whether adequate supervision is available, whether the scope of the proposed project is appropriate for the degree (the maximum for a 120-point Master's thesis being 40,000 words including scholarly apparatus such as footnotes, appendices and bibliography), whether adequate resources are available and whether the student has adequate academic training and/or other experience to be able to bring the project to a successful conclusion. The relevance of the intended project to the general research strategy of the School may also be taken into account.

Please note: this is an 'initial' proposal only. The [Master's Thesis Policy](#) requires that within one month of enrolment for the thesis the candidate must submit a research proposal which details the aim of the thesis project, methods of study, ethical considerations and resource requirements.

4.2 HUMAN ETHICS APPROVAL

Research involving human subjects must be undertaken on the basis of the informed consent of those being studied and in accordance with ethical principles. If Master's research involves human subjects or human tissue, or otherwise affects the privacy, rights or freedoms of one or more humans, it is subject to Human Ethics Committee approval. Potential candidates should read and discuss the Committee's guidelines with their Supervisors to determine whether or not they need to [Apply for Ethical Approval](#). Applications are made online via Research Master. Any doubt in this matter may be referred to the Head of School or Convener of the Human Ethics Committee.

4.3 ANIMAL ETHICS APPROVAL

If Master's research involves animal subjects it is subject to Animal Ethics Committee approval. Potential candidates should read and discuss the Committee's guidelines with their Supervisors to determine whether or not they need to [Apply for Ethical Approval](#). Any doubt in this matter may be referred to the Head of School or Convener of the Animal Ethics Committee.

4.4 CONFIDENTIAL OR SENSITIVE MATERIAL

A thesis is a public document, subject to the scrutiny of academics and the general public. Applicants and their Supervisors should consider at the outset of the project whether a proposal is likely to result in a request for withholding access to the completed thesis. Such requests should be made to the Dean, FGR, as early as possible. See [Withholding Access to the Thesis \(Section 7.4.2.2\)](#).

4.5 COLLABORATING INSTITUTIONS

In some cases research for a Master's thesis may be undertaken by candidates working in another institution, the research facilities of which may complement those of the University. In such cases the Supervisor of the candidate will usually be a member of staff of the University, while a member of the collaborating institution may be appointed as an additional Supervisor subject to approval (see [Section 6.1.1](#)).

Any research institution that provides resources and/or supervision to a Master's candidate should be invited to enter into an agreement of formal academic collaboration with the University. The candidate will usually be expected to disseminate their findings through seminars or other means to both the collaborating institution and the University community.

The placement of candidates in institutions engaged in work of a commercial nature should be covered in a contract in which the income and/or intellectual property rights of the candidate, the University and the collaborating institution are clearly set out. Any such contract requires the approval of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research).

5.0 ENROLMENT FOR THE MASTER'S THESIS

5.1 ENROLMENT FORMS

In addition to the enrolment form required to be completed by all Master's applicants (see [Section 2.3.2](#)), those intending to register for a thesis or dissertation valued at 90 points or more must complete a separate registration form:

Applicants for a Master's degree with a thesis component worth at least 90 points must complete the *Application for Master's Degree by Thesis or with a Thesis Component* form. This form is available on the [Faculty website](#) or from the Faculty Student and Academic Services Office.

Applicants for an MMA, MMus or MMusTher with a thesis component worth at least 90 points must complete a [Master's Degree by Thesis or with a Thesis Component Application Form](#), and an *application form for an NZSM Master's programme*.

5.2 DURATION OF ENROLMENT

A 120-point Master's thesis will normally require around three trimesters of full-time study or one academic year to complete. With the approval of the Head of School, a candidate may enrol for a thesis part-time. A Master's thesis is expected to be completed within 12 months of initial registration for full-time study and within 2 years for part-time registrations, although an extension may be granted in exceptional circumstances (see below).

5.3 RE-ENROLMENT

A Master's candidate must maintain their enrolment while working on the research project, and pay any associated registration fees. Re-enrolment, one calendar year after initial registration, requires the completion of a [Postgraduate Re-enrolment Application](#), also available from the Faculty Student and Academic Services Office. Full-time students will also need to apply for an extension before re-enrolling (see [Section 5.5](#)) and must fulfil a strictly limited set of conditions to be eligible to do so. Every candidate must be aware of the day on which their enrolment is due to expire, and ensure that the re-enrolment process is initiated well in advance of this date. Once an enrolment has lapsed it may be resumed only with the approval of the Associate Dean.

5.4 SUSPENSION OF ENROLMENT

A Master's candidate who, for exceptional circumstances, is unable to continue with a research project, may request a temporary suspension of enrolment (in monthly increments up to a maximum of six months)*. The application form can be obtained from the Student Advisers in the Faculty [Student and Academic Services Office](#) or downloaded from www.victoria.ac.nz/fhss/student-admin/forms#postgraduate. Once completed by the candidate, Supervisor and Head of School this application is forwarded to the Associate Dean for consideration. A retrospective suspension of enrolment will be granted only in exceptional circumstances, and needs the additional approval of the Dean, FGR. During a period of suspended enrolment, a candidate is not liable for fees, but may not receive supervision or make use of University facilities. There may also be implications for StudyLink eligibility, etc.

*The full list of eligible exceptional circumstances can be found in s.4.2.2 of the [2013 Master's Thesis Policy](#).

5.5 EXTENSION OF ENROLMENT

An extension must be sought by any candidate whose total duration of registration for a thesis (not including time spent on suspension) exceeds 12 months for full-time registration and 2 years for part-time registrations. The Faculty does not encourage candidates to spend a longer period of time writing a thesis than is necessary, but may approve an extension of enrolment for a candidate who, although unable to complete the research on time, is actively engaged in their studies. Please note:

extensions are exceptional and only normally granted on the grounds listed in the thesis policy. Application forms for an extension are available from the Student Advisers or downloaded from www.victoria.ac.nz/fhss/student-admin/forms#postgraduate.

On application from a candidate, the Associate Dean may grant up to three months' extension to the time for completion of the thesis on any of the grounds in 4.2.2 (a) of the [2013 Master's Thesis Policy](#). A request for an extension must be accompanied by a detailed plan for completion of the thesis within the time requested. Repeated requests for extensions from a candidate who has not made adequate progress in their research will not be granted. Where an extension has been granted, a candidate will be required to re-enrol in the normal manner (see above) and pay the associated tuition and ancillary fees.

5.6 CONVERSION OF A MASTER'S DEGREE TO A PHD

As long as their Master's thesis has not yet been submitted, it is possible for a Master's student to have their enrolment upgraded to PhD. If the Supervisor believes that the Candidate has demonstrated the aptitude and level of competence required for PhD study and that the research, with modifications, could form the basis of a PhD thesis, the candidate and their Supervisor may apply to the SRC to recommend that the Associate Dean approve a change of status ([PhD Approval form to upgrade a Master's thesis](#)). Such a recommendation will be made only if the Committee is satisfied that the existing Supervisor is appropriately qualified and experienced to supervise at PhD level, and that a second Supervisor is available to be appointed.

The candidate and Supervisors should agree in writing on the additional work required for the new degree, and this document will replace the initial proposal in the normal PhD process. If the application for a change of status is approved by the Associate Dean, the candidate will be deemed to have been provisionally registered for the PhD from the date of their registration for the Master's Degree, but will still be required to satisfy the requirements for full registration. For more on the requirements of a PhD see the [FGR website](#).

6.0 SUPERVISION OF THE MASTER'S THESIS

6.1 THE APPOINTMENT OF SUPERVISORS

Each candidate will work under the guidance of at least one supervisor appointed on behalf of the University by the Head of School. The Supervisor (or where there is more than one supervisor, the Primary Supervisor) must be a professor or lecturer of the University in the sense of the Victoria University of Wellington Act 1961, which includes senior lecturers, readers and associate professors. Exceptionally, people holding appointments such as research fellows or research associates may act as supervisors providing they have been approved by the Associate Dean. A supervisor should have no other significant personal, professional or contractual relationship with the candidate. The Head of School should ensure that appropriate supervision

arrangements are in place (in writing to all parties) if the Primary Supervisor is to be absent from the University for any longer than one month.

6.1.1 THE APPOINTMENT OF AN EXTERNAL SUPERVISOR

If it is appropriate for a scholar from outside the University to be involved in the supervisory team, they will be appointed, on the recommendation of the Head of School and Associate Dean, as an Honorary Research Associate, by the Dean of the FGR. Where approval is given, the relationship must be made the subject of an agreement between the University, the candidate and the external party prior to the commencement of the research project. This agreement will make clear the expectations and obligations of the parties concerned, and establish the terms and conditions under which it is intended that the project proceed. It is important that any such agreement includes provision for revisiting the agreed terms during the project, and that it complies with the *Management of External Research Consultancy and Related Contracts Policy* and the *Intellectual Property Policy* www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/strategy.

See also the section on [External Supervisors](#) on the FGR website.

6.2 CHANGES TO THE SUPERVISORY TEAM

The Supervisor must seek approval from the Associate Dean for any change to the supervisory team, providing a rationale for the change and a recommendation for the appointment of a new Supervisor or new Supervisors. Where the supervisory team for a candidate is changed as a result of conflict or disagreement between the candidate and a Supervisor, the former Supervisor shall not act as the Internal Examiner for the thesis.

6.3 SUPERVISOR QUALIFICATIONS AND TRAINING

Only those academic staff with a Master's thesis degree or doctorate in an appropriate subject area and/or evidence of an established research record should undertake the primary supervision of students and then only if they have appropriate experience or training. The Head of School is responsible for ensuring that only qualified members of staff gain approval as Supervisors and for requesting that staff complete a [professional development programme](#) for Supervisors. A new staff member is required to attend a professional development programme during the initial period of their employment. External supervisors should be invited to participate in an appropriate development programme as part of their appointment and should complete this as soon as possible after agreeing to serve in a supervisory capacity.

6.4 SUPPORT FOR SUPERVISORS

The FGR offers regular seminars and workshops for both new and experienced Supervisors. Topics include supervisory roles and responsibilities, the research process and administrative requirements. See [Orientation and Workshops for Staff](#).

6.5 THE SUPERVISOR'S ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The primary responsibility of supervisors is to assist students to complete the research within an agreed time frame. This includes taking reasonable steps, consistent with available resources to:

- provide a framework within which the academic work can take place;
- provide academic guidance;
- provide appropriate and timely feedback;
- assess progress;
- facilitate administrative compliance;
- act as a guide to University facilities;
- guide the candidate to identify other relevant expertise to progress the research;
- encourage the candidate to participate in University intellectual life and develop professional contacts outside the University;
- identify potential Examiners and recommend their appointment to the Head of School well in advance of the thesis being submitted for examination.

6.6 EVALUATING THE PROGRESS OF THE CANDIDATE

Supervisors are responsible for providing to candidates adequate and timely feedback and evaluation of progress. In particular if any doubt arises as to the ability of a candidate to complete the research this must be raised and dealt with as soon as is practicable for the benefit of both the candidate and the University. Supervisors should provide feedback in writing on written work. Supervisors must keep a record of formal supervisory meetings and record any significant advice or transactions that are not dealt with in three- and eight-month progress reports.

6.6.1 ONE-MONTH CONFIRMATION OF RESEARCH PROPOSAL PROCESS

Within one month of enrolment for the thesis the candidate must submit a research proposal which details the aim of the thesis project, methods of study, ethical considerations and resource requirements. In FHSS, the Student Adviser will contact the candidate to initiate the process. The research proposal will not normally exceed

5 pages or 2,500 words. The SRC will scrutinise the research proposal and make a recommendation to the Head of School. The Head of School (or nominee) will then provide written feedback to the candidate, and the Student and Academic Services Office will confirm this with formal notification to the candidate.

Note: A template for the Confirmation of Master's Thesis Research Proposal is available on the [FGR website](#).

6.6.2 THREE- AND EIGHT-MONTH PROGRESS REPORTS

A Master's thesis academic progress report will be completed at the end of the third month of enrolment to ensure that the candidate is making adequate progress and the supervisory relationship is working well. Any issues or concerns will be addressed by the Head of School, or nominee. At eight months a more substantial Master's thesis academic progress report will be completed, reviewed by the Head of School and forwarded to the Associate Dean.

In FHSS, the Student Adviser will contact the candidate to initiate the Progress Report process. The writing of the report is the joint responsibility of the supervisor and the candidate. The candidate and supervisor will see and acknowledge each other's comments in the reports. Any identified problems and proposed methods of addressing them should be discussed with the candidate before the report is finalised. A copy must be provided to the candidate and the original report held on their file in the home Faculty office.

Note: Templates for the three-month academic progress report and the eight-month report are available on the [FGR website](#).

6.7 EVALUATION OF RESEARCH SUPERVISION

The Master's thesis academic progress reports provide an opportunity for candidates to comment on the quality of their supervision. Candidates can raise any issue in confidence with the Postgraduate Coordinator, Head of School or Associate Dean at any time.

6.8 THE CANDIDATE'S ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Completing a Master's programme requires progressive development of skills, competence and confidence. Candidates must take responsibility for independently pursuing their studies with the guidance of their supervisors in a manner which develops their own intellectual independence. This includes taking reasonable steps, consistent with available resources, to:

- plan and actively pursue the research;
- identify and deal with any research-related problems;
- comply with administrative requirements;
- meet ethical guidelines;

- give at least one month's notice to their supervisor of their intention to submit;
- take responsibility for the final form of the thesis; and
- participate in University intellectual life.

7.0 PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION OF THE MASTER'S THESIS

7.1 PHYSICAL APPEARANCE OF THE MASTER'S THESIS

A thesis must be prepared in accordance with [Library Requirements](#), and candidates are strongly advised to check [formatting requirements](#) carefully before the commencement of the writing process.

Good quality A4 white paper should be used, numbered pages, size 12 font, with larger material (such as charts, etc.) folded to conform to A4 format. Lines must be at least 1.5 spaces apart, with a margin of at least 2 cm and no more than 4 cm on the binding side of the page.

Photographs should be dry mounted or mounted on guard sheets. Pages must be numbered consecutively and page numbers should appear on every page in a consistent position (the title page is not normally numbered). Indented quotations may be distinguished from the main text by using single line spacing or a smaller font size. A 120-point Master's thesis is expected to be a maximum of 40,000 words in length. The length of a 90-point thesis will be correspondingly shorter.

If a student's thesis has a non-standard format which has been approved by the Head of School, a Non-Standard Format Permission form must be included with the thesis upon submission. See the Library website for the instructions and form for [Non-Standard Thesis Formats](#).

7.1.1 CITATION STYLE

It is important that candidates conform to the citation conventions considered appropriate to their specific disciplines. Supervisors should be able to advise on these conventions, but the Library's [Referencing and Citing](#) page should also be consulted early in the project.

7.1.2 SUGGESTED LAYOUT OF TITLE PAGE

| |
|--|
| <p>[THE FULL TITLE OF THE THESIS]</p> <p>By</p> <p>[Candidate's Full Name]</p> <p>A thesis submitted to the Victoria University of Wellington in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of [Master of Arts] in [Subject Area]</p> <p>Victoria University of Wellington</p> <p>[20XX Year of Submission]</p> |
|--|

7.2 DECISION TO SUBMIT THE THESIS

The decision to make an application for a thesis to be examined shall be made by the candidate after consultation with the Supervisor. However, the University has an obligation to Examiners to take reasonable steps to ensure that any thesis sent for examination is complete and otherwise suitable for examination. A thesis is not complete unless it constitutes an independent scholarly work inclusive of all scholarly apparatus usual in the discipline. This includes an abstract, a table of contents and a reference list. It should be presented in a form regarded as suitable for examination in the discipline concerned including being expressed in appropriate and accurate language and it should conform to all other formal requirements of the University for the presentation of a thesis, including word limits.

When the candidate indicates the thesis is ready to be submitted, it should be reviewed by the Supervisor before the thesis is submitted for examination. This review period should not usually exceed two weeks.

If the Supervisor is of the opinion that the thesis is not suitable for examination, the Supervisor may recommend to the Associate Dean that the thesis not be accepted

for examination. Such a recommendation shall be accompanied by reasons and notified to the candidate who shall have the opportunity to make submissions to the Associate Dean.

The Associate Dean, after appropriate consultation, may decide that the thesis is not suitable for examination, either because it is not complete or on the grounds that no Examiner could reasonably be expected to recommend that the candidate be awarded a Master's degree. If the Associate Dean so decides, the candidate shall be advised of the reasons for the decision and the changes necessary to make the thesis suitable for examination. Should the Associate Dean decide that a thesis is not suitable for examination the candidate may appeal against that decision to the Dean FGR.

Modifications that are required for any of the following reasons must be addressed by the candidate before the thesis can be sent out to 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; or;
- failure to comply with the policy on length of theses.

However, even if the Dean FGR should support the Associate Dean's decision that the thesis is not suitable for examination on grounds other than those specified above, the candidate retains the right to have the thesis examined.

7.3 GIVING NOTICE OF INTENTION TO SUBMIT

The Postgraduate Coordinator and Head of School should be informed of the candidate's intention to submit the thesis for examination well in advance of the expected submission so that appropriate examination arrangements can be made (see [Section 8.1](#)). This notice should usually be given no less than four weeks before the expected date of submission.

7.4 SUBMISSION OF THE THESIS

The candidate shall submit two copies of the thesis to the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences Student and Academic Services Office and, in addition, where required, an electronic copy (see [Section 7.1](#) above and [Formats for Theses](#) on the Library website). At this point the thesis may be bound in soft or temporary binding to allow for revisions and amendments to be made once the examination is complete, but the binding must be such that there is no risk of pages becoming detached.

Printing, copying and soft-binding services are available on campus at the Fuji Xerox Copy Centre (fuji.xerox@vuw.ac.nz). For off campus binding services consult the [Yellow Pages](#).

On submission of copies of the thesis, the candidate is required to apply for examination. The Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences Student and Academic Services Office will require the candidate to:

- sign a “[Statement of Authorship](#)” form to confirm that the work of others has been acknowledged in the thesis and that the thesis has not been submitted previously for another degree;
- sign an “Availability of Thesis” form to indicate that the thesis may be consulted, borrowed, copied or reproduced in accordance with the Library regulations. Such consent may be delayed if the candidate has received the approval of the Dean FGR to have access to the thesis withheld for a limited given period of time (see the Withholding of Theses Procedure (see [Section 7.4.2.2](#))).
- provide a “[Thesis Supervisor’s Statement](#)” form signed by the supervisor certifying that the candidate has pursued the research in accordance with the requirements of the relevant statutes and indicating what part the supervisor played in the preparation of the thesis.

On submission of the thesis, the home Faculty Office will arrange for the candidate to submit an exit questionnaire.

7.4.1 STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP

On submission of the thesis, the candidate will be required to sign a [Statement of Authorship](#), confirming that the thesis is their own work, has been prepared specifically for this degree (i.e. not submitted previously for another degree), and that it does not contain any work from another author (published or unpublished) that has not been appropriately acknowledged in the main text of the thesis.

See also [Academic Integrity and Plagiarism](#).

7.4.2 THESIS AVAILABILITY

7.4.2.1 Thesis Availability Form

The University [Human Ethics Committee Guidelines](#) require that research be disseminated, and that knowledge be accessible both to the academic community and to the general public. On submission of the thesis, the candidate will be required to sign a Thesis Availability Slip, which will make the final version of the thesis available through the Victoria University Library and through the Library interloan system. The Slip will be forwarded to the Library where it will be held until the final deposit (see [Section 8.7.2](#)) is made.

See also [Depositing Your Thesis](#).

7.4.2.2 Withholding Access to the Thesis

All information held by the University is subject to the Official Information Act 1982, which operates on the principle that “information shall be available unless there is a good reason for withholding it.” Valid reasons for nondisclosure might include a potential threat to national or economic security, to the maintenance of law and order or to the safety of any person, or if information contained therein were of a personally or commercially sensitive nature. In such a case, the candidate should apply to the Dean, FGR, to withhold access at the outset of research, or as soon as the need for an embargo becomes apparent. The application must be supported by the Supervisor and the Head of School. Candidates and their Supervisors should be aware that under the Act, disclosure may be required if “in the circumstances of the particular case, the withholding of that information is outweighed by other considerations which render it desirable, in the public interest, to make that information available.”

Refer to the [Withholding of Theses Procedure](#). See also Section 4.12.3 (c) of the [Library Statute](#).

7.5 EXIT QUESTIONNAIRE

Upon submission of the thesis the candidate will be invited to complete an Exit Questionnaire. This is an opportunity for the candidate to comment frankly about the quality of their supervision, as well as any other aspects of the candidacy that may have affected (adversely or otherwise) their progress. The Exit Questionnaire is anonymously returned to the FGR in a sealed envelope and they are opened in April, August and December (regardless of when the student submits) and the FGR take note of any issues reported at that time. Aggregated results are made available to the Associate Dean of the relevant Faculty.

8.0 EXAMINATION OF THE MASTER'S THESIS

A Master's thesis is examined by two Examiners of standing in the relevant discipline, one of whom will normally be external to the University.

8.1 APPOINTMENT OF EXAMINERS

Once a candidate has given notice of their intention to submit (see [Section 7.3](#)), the School must make arrangements for the examination of the thesis. Prospective Examiners should be approached informally by the Supervisor or Head of School well in advance of the expected submission of the thesis. This contact should confirm that the Examiner is willing and able to complete the examination of the thesis within the expected timeframe of one month. The candidate may be consulted on potential Examiners, but must not be told which Examiners have been nominated or appointed.

The Head of School (usually after consultation with the SRC) makes the recommendation of Examiners to the Associate Dean, who, if satisfied, will endorse

the recommendation. In the case of the External Examiner, the recommendation of the Head of School must be accompanied by a brief *curriculum vitae*.

8.2 EXAMINATION

Once the thesis has been submitted, the Faculty [Student and Academic Services Office](#) will send one copy to each Examiner, accompanied by examination instructions and a cover sheet. Examiners' reports and the copies of the thesis are returned to the Faculty Student and Academic Services Office. ***Consultation between the two Examiners, or between an Examiner and either the candidate or the Supervisor is prohibited until both the reports have been received by the Faculty.*** The reports will then be sent to the Convener of the SRC for a recommendation.

Examiners must submit a written report to the Associate Dean in the home Faculty and recommend a grade. Any confidential comments should be contained in a separate document. The Examiner's name will be attached to their report (unless they request to remain anonymous) and after the grade has been determined, the reports will be released to the candidate and the supervisor.

8.3 RESULTS OF THE EXAMINATION PROCESS

The Examiners will recommend one of four possible outcomes of the examination process:

8.3.1 UNCONDITIONAL ACCEPTANCE OF THE THESIS

Where the thesis as it stands meets the requirements for the Degree and may be deposited (when permanently bound) in the Library.

8.3.2 CONDITIONAL ACCEPTANCE OF THE THESIS

Where the thesis will meet the requirements for the Degree once minor amendments or revisions are made. In such a case the permanently bound thesis may be deposited in the Library once the candidate has made the necessary amendments to the satisfaction of the Internal Examiner or Supervisor; this must be done within three months unless stated otherwise. Formal resubmission of the thesis is not required.

8.3.3 CALL FOR SUBSTANTIVE REVISION

Where the thesis as it stands does not meet the requirements for the Degree, but may do so after a period of revision. In such a case the candidate will be informed of the necessary revisions and given a period of up to six months within which the thesis must be re-submitted. During the period of revision, the candidate will be required to re-enrol and will be liable for the fees associated with this further period of candidacy. After re-submission, the thesis will be re-examined by the original Examiners unless exceptional circumstances render this impossible. A thesis may not be re-submitted a second time.

8.3.4 FAILURE

Where the thesis does not meet the requirements for the Degree and in the opinion of the Examiners would not do so even after a period of up to six months' revision.

8.4 GRADES AND CLASSES OF AWARD

Where an Examiner recommends that the thesis be accepted, he/she will also recommend that it be awarded (once any necessary amendments have been made) one of the following grades (percentages are given here as a guide but are not usually provided):

| | | |
|-----|-----------|---|
| A+ | 90%–100% | Outstanding performance |
| A | 85%–89% | Excellent performance |
| A - | 80%–84% | Excellent performance in most respects |
| B+ | 75%–79% | Very good performance |
| B | 70%–74% | Good performance |
| B - | 65%–69% | Good performance overall, but some weaknesses |
| C+ | 60%–64% | Satisfactory to good performance |
| C | 55%–59% | Satisfactory performance |
| C- | 50%–54% | Adequate evidence of learning |
| D | 40%–49% | Poor performance overall, some evidence of learning |
| E | Below 40% | Well below the standard required |

In addition, where a thesis is the sole piece of assessed work for a Degree that can be awarded with Distinction or Merit, the grades will correspond to the following classes of award:

| | |
|-------------|--------------------|
| Distinction | A+ or A |
| Merit | A- or B+ |
| Pass | B, B-, C+, C or C- |
| Fail | D or E |

A re-submitted thesis may not be awarded a grade higher than a C-, and as such, no candidate may be awarded Distinction or Merit for any Degree for which a thesis has been re-submitted.

8.5 DETERMINATION AND NOTIFICATION OF RESULTS

Examiners' reports are reviewed by the SRC, which makes a recommendation to the Associate Dean. Where the Examiners are in agreement the SRC will usually accept their recommendation. Where the Examiners are not in agreement the SRC will discuss the grade and either ask the Examiners to come to an agreement as to the final grade or, if the Examiners cannot do this, institute some process for arriving at a decision which must involve:

- requesting a report from the supervisor in the light of the Examiners' reports to help resolve any disagreement;

and may also involve:

- consulting with the relevant Associate Dean;
- consulting with the Dean of the FGR;
- asking an external referee to adjudicate.

The SRC will make a recommendation to the Associate Dean as to the final outcome of the examination. Where examiners have recommended editorial changes to the thesis prior to deposit in the University Library, the SRC may make the completion of such changes a condition for the awarding of the degree, and shall arrange for the changes to be checked and approved by an appropriate person. On the basis of this recommendation the Associate Dean will determine the final result and arrange for this to be communicated to the candidate, the Supervisor(s), the Postgraduate Coordinator and the Examiners by the Faculty Student and Academic Services Office.

Candidates who wish to appeal the grade and/or award they have received, should do so in writing to the Associate Dean, detailing why they believe the grade and/or award they have received to be unjust. Under such circumstances, the Associate Dean will request the SRC to reconsider the examination reports, and the recommendations from the Examiners in the light of the issues raised by the candidate. The SRC must also request a written report from the supervisor(s).

The SRC makes a recommendation to the Associate Dean on whether there should be any change to the grade and/or award, or may recommend that the thesis be sent out to a referee. The basis for the SRC recommendation should be set out in writing.

The Associate Dean makes the final decision on the appeal and informs the candidate, supervisor and Examiners.

A candidate who is dissatisfied with the manner in which the examination or any appeal under was conducted may make a further appeal, in writing, to the Dean of the FGR. The Dean can consider only matters of procedure.

8.6 RETURN OF THE THESIS AFTER EXAMINATION

After the result of the examination has been communicated to the Examiners, it is expected that they will return their copies of the thesis if they have not already done so.

8.7 BINDING AND DEPOSIT OF THE THESIS

Once the results of the examination process have been released, and once any amendments and revisions have been made, the candidate is required to deposit one bound copy of the thesis and one electronic copy in the Library. The candidate's School may also request a bound copy.

8.7.1 BINDING

The deposited thesis must be fully bound (not stapled) and cased in cloth or buckram. The deposited thesis must not be a photocopy, and must include all tables, charts, figures and photographs included in the examined thesis. The candidate's family name and initials, and the title or short title of the thesis must be lettered on the spine. The candidate's full name and the full title of the thesis must be lettered on the front cover. Works that do not fall within the usual A4 format may be bound or boxed in a manner appropriate for their presentation, provided that the information that would have been included on the spine is visible when the item is shelved. For binders in Wellington consult the [Yellow Pages](#). The candidate is solely responsible for all costs associated with having the thesis bound.

See also [Section 8.7.2](#) below.

8.7.2 DEPOSITING YOUR THESIS

Deposit of both print and electronic versions (pdf format, no larger than 2GB) of the thesis is required. The bound thesis is deposited at Collections Services, Central Library. Collections Services will accept the deposit only if it is accompanied by a completed “Thesis Availability Slip”, or if a completed Slip has already been received from the Faculty Student and Academic Services Office. A receipt will be emailed to Faculty Student and Academic Services Office by the Library at the time of the deposit. Eligibility to have the Degree conferred is dependent on the sighting of this receipt by the Faculty Student and Academic Services Office.

See [Submit Your Thesis](#) on the Library website for more information on the requirements.

PART C

9.0 RESEARCH ADVICE AND RESOURCES

9.1 SCHOOL RESOURCES TO SUPPORT MASTER'S CANDIDATES

The availability of resources provided to support Master's candidates during their research varies between Schools. Every candidate enrolled for a thesis worth 90 points or more is covered by the [Minimum Resources Agreement](#) between the University and the Postgraduate Students' Association. This Agreement ensures that each thesis student is provided with a desk, a chair, a computer, lockable storage, etc. The *Minimum Resources Agreement* also applies to candidates making revisions to theses following examination. Master's candidates whose Degrees do not include a thesis component should discuss the provision of research resources with their School Managers.

9.2 INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES

Under the *Minimum Resources Agreement* any candidate registered for a 90- or 120-point thesis must be provided with a staff user name and have access to staff resources (including email) both through a Victoria computer and offsite. See the [Information Technology Services](#) (ITS) page for details.

Students not covered by the *Minimum Resources Agreement* (i.e. students not registered for a thesis worth at least 90 points) will be provided with a student user name (this is the user name that appears on a *Confirmation of Study*) and have access to student resources (including email) both through a Victoria computer and offsite. See the [Student Computing Services](#) (SCS) page for details.

It is important that candidates ensure that their discipline specific information technology requirements are met. Foreign language input or statistical packages can be installed by ITS or SCS onto any Victoria computer. Candidates are encouraged to discuss their special requirements with their School Managers.

The bibliographic management programme [Endnote](#) may be downloaded from the [Library website](#).

9.2.1 WORKING WITH COMPUTERS

Prolonged, repetitive or excessive use of a computer has the potential to cause occupational overuse syndrome (OOS). Candidates are strongly advised to ensure that their workstations are set up in an ergonomic manner – for details see the [Health and Safety](#) website. This site also contains details of OOS Busters courses held throughout the year.

It is essential that students make a habit of saving their work to removable storage devices, to insure against the loss of material due to computer failure.

9.3 STUDENT LEARNING SUPPORT SERVICE

The [Student Learning Support Service](#) (SLSS) offers a number of free services for postgraduate students at Kelburn and Pipitea campuses. It offers one-on-one consultations on any aspect of the research or writing process, as well as a series of seminars and workshops that cover a range of issues pertaining to postgraduate study. Current topics are:

- Research Proposals;
- Ethical Approval;
- Qualitative Research;
- Quantitative Research;
- Literature Reviews;
- Oral Presentations
- Database Searches;
- Managing your Studies;
- Applying for Funding;
- Developing Thesis Argument;
- Academic Integrity.

SLSS also has a Mathematics and Statistics Advisor who is available to discuss issues related to quantitative research and analysis. For contact details see under Student Services Group ([Section 11.3](#)).

9.4 FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES WEBSITE

The Faculty [Student and Academic Services Office](#) website has a range of information including forms and useful links.

9.5 THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

For most Master's candidates in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, the resources and services offered by the Victoria University Library will be an integral component of any research project. Students are strongly advised to consult the [Library Website](#) on a regular basis for updated information about the Library, its collections and its services. For general enquiries phone +64 4 463 6186.

9.5.1 LENDING SERVICES

All Master's candidates receive postgraduate library privileges, allowing the issuing of books from the main collection (excluding three-day loan books) for up to four weeks, and most periodicals for up to two weeks. If borrowing privileges are required during the preparation of a thesis proposal, but prior to formal enrolment, the Lending Services Group will usually grant temporary borrowing privileges upon receipt of a supporting letter from the proposed Supervisor. Information on the Library's various collections is available through the Library under [Collections](#).

9.5.2 REFERENCE AND RESEARCH SERVICES

The [Subject Guides](#) and [Subject Librarians](#) page of the Library website contains the contact details of the librarians assigned to specific subject areas, and who are available for consultation on research related issues.

Database searching is available through the Library website. The range of databases and research tools to which the Library is subscribed is extremely wide, and candidates are encouraged to talk to their Supervisors and other staff members within their Schools to find the most relevant to their particular disciplines. Reference staff are also available to advise on suitable resources and provide assistance where necessary.

9.5.3 LIBRARY RESEARCH SEMINARS

Library Research Seminars are offered at the beginning of the first trimester. Details are available through the Library website or the Postgraduate Students' Association.

9.5.4 INTER-LIBRARY LOAN

The Library provides an Interloan service. Through this service you can access the collections of other libraries, nationally and internationally. This service, which can be accessed via the [Library Interloan Request Form](#), is available to all current staff and students of Victoria University of Wellington for private research, study, and teaching only. In many cases Interloans will be supplied to you free of charge. You will need to check first that your item cannot be found in the Library Catalogue.

10.0 FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

10.1 FINANCIAL SUPPORT AND ADVICE

[Financial Support and Advice](#) is part of the [Student Support Services](#) and can offer budget advice, hardship assistance and information about loans and allowances. For contact details see under Student Services ([Section 11.3](#)).

10.2 STUDYLINK

[StudyLink](#) is the division of the Ministry of Social Development charged with the administration of Student Allowances and Student Loans. Please note that Student Allowances are no longer available to Master's students, although they may be eligible for an Accommodation Supplement. See the [StudyLink website](#) for changes in eligibility for postgraduate students.

10.3 UNIVERSITY SCHOLARSHIPS

The [Scholarships Office](#) (scholarships-office@vuw.ac.nz) is part of the FGR and is in charge of the administration of University and other scholarships. A searchable database of available scholarships may be found on the [Scholarships website](#). There are also a number of [Summer Research Scholarships](#) which offer a unique opportunity for students to obtain experience in research.

10.4 FACULTY RESEARCH GRANTS

The [Faculty Research Committee](#) (FRC) is authorised to make grants of up to \$2,000 to cover research expenses of Master's thesis students over the period of enrolment, and up to \$1000 for research expenses related to the research component of partially-taught Master's programmes (this should be at least a 90-point dissertation). Students enrolled in research papers/dissertations (valued at 60 points) may be granted up to a maximum of \$250 for expenses directly related to their research. The FRC considers applications for library costs, purchase of materials, travel-related costs and other research related expenses. These are contestable funds and must be applied for. For further details, see the [Faculty Grants FAQs for students](#) on the FHSS website.

10.5 EXTERNALLY-FUNDED SCHOLARSHIPS AND GRANTS

An increasing number of contestable funding opportunities are available to postgraduate students through organisations external to the University. It is important that candidates are aware of any conditions attached to the acceptance of external awards, and ensure that any agreements are formulated in a way that protects their interests and those of the University. The [Scholarships website](#) has a number of links to possible sources of external funding, including the following major sites:

- [Universities New Zealand](#);
- [Tertiary Education Commission](#);
- [Foundation for Research, Science and Technology](#);
- [Education New Zealand](#).

10.6 EMPLOYMENT WITHIN SCHOOLS

Many Schools are able to provide employment opportunities to postgraduate students in the form of teaching, tutoring or marking, or Research Assistant. Candidates should consult their School Managers on the availability of such positions. Tutor training is available through the [Centre for Academic Development](#).

11.0 UNIVERSITY STUDENT SERVICES

11.1 POSTGRADUATE LIAISON OFFICER

Potential domestic students (New Zealand or Australian citizens or permanent residents) should address questions about postgraduate study at Victoria to the University's Postgraduate Liaison Officer via email at postgrad-enquiries@vuw.ac.nz.

11.2 VICTORIA INTERNATIONAL

Victoria International is the first point of contact for international students.

www.victoria.ac.nz/international
+64 4 463 5350
victoria-international@vuw.ac.nz

11.3 STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

All enrolled Victoria University students are eligible to access the wide range of services available through Student Support Services.

www.victoria.ac.nz/students/support

Accommodation Service

www.victoria.ac.nz/accommodation
+64 4 463 5896
accommodation@vuw.ac.nz

Career Development and Employment

www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/careers
+64 4 463 5393
careers-service@vuw.ac.nz

Crèche

www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/creche
+64 4 463 5021

Disability Services

www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/disability
+64 4 463 6070
disability@vuw.ac.nz

Financial Support and Advice

www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/finAdvice

+64 4 463 7474

student-hardship@vuw.ac.nz

Māori Student Support

www.victoria.ac.nz/students/support/maori

Pasifika Student Support

www.victoria.ac.nz/vicpasifika/our-university/support

Student Counselling Service

www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/counselling

+64 4 463 5310

counselling-service@vuw.ac.nz

Student Health Service

www.victoria.ac.nz/studenthealth

+64 4 463 5308

student-health@vuw.ac.nz

Student Learning Support Service

www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/slss

+64 4 463 5999

studentlearning@vuw.ac.nz

11.4 NEW TO VIC ORIENTATION

A postgraduate orientation session is part of the New to Vic Orientation programme held in February and July. See the [website](#) for details and to download a copy of the *New Student Guide*. FHSS also sends targeted emails to Master's students with any updates on policy or procedures and information about postgraduate information sessions and Faculty social events.

11.5 VICTORIA UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION

www.vuwsa.org.nz

+64 4 463 6716

kelburn@vuwsa.org.nz

11.6 VICTORIA UNIVERSITY POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION

www.victoria.ac.nz/pgsa

+64 4 463 6973

pgsa-ea@vuw.ac.nz

11.7 POSTGRADLIFE

For information, resources, useful links and advice aimed at the University's postgraduate community.

www.victoria.ac.nz/postgradlife

12.0 RESOLUTION OF PROBLEMS

12.1 GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Postgraduate research is an inherently difficult process that has the potential to challenge the candidate with unforeseen academic, personal, social or economic difficulties. Differences of opinion between candidates and Supervisors over questions related to the scopes or methods of research projects are not uncommon, and can usually be resolved satisfactorily within Schools. Where disputing parties have failed to reach agreement or compromise over an academic issue, or where a dispute is of a more personal nature (including a possible breach of the *Student Conduct Statute* or *Staff Conduct Policy*, see below), it may be necessary to explore other dispute resolution options.

All parties should make reasonable efforts to resolve any difficulties as soon as possible, as significant delays have the potential to provide further unnecessary disruption to the research project. The goal of any conflict resolution process must be to allow the research to continue and to be completed within the scheduled timeframe. In some cases it may be that a change of Supervisor may be the best way to achieve this outcome. The Faculty expects any party to a resolution process to conduct himself/herself with professionalism, and to remain mindful at all times of the reputation and standing of the University. [The Student Interest and Disputes Resolution Advisor](#) is who you should contact if these issues arise.

12.2 THE STUDENT CONDUCT STATUTE

The [Student Conduct Statute](#) identifies the sorts of behaviour deemed unacceptable by the University community, and provides processes by which concerns may be addressed. The preamble to the *Statute* states:

Students are expected to act in ways that are consistent with the role and guiding values of the University, and to regulate their own conduct so as not to impede or prejudice the work of other members of the community. They are entitled to work, learn, study and participate in the social aspects of the University's life in an environment of safety and respect. It is expected that students will act with integrity and demonstrate respect for others.

Among types of conduct specifically prohibited under the *Statute* are discrimination, sexual or racial harassment, academic misconduct (including plagiarism), the misuse of information and the misuse of University computer systems.

12.3 THE STAFF CONDUCT POLICY

The [Staff Conduct Policy](#) similarly sets down the rights and obligations of Supervisors and other members of staff. The Standards of Conduct section (s.4.1) of the *Policy* states:

All Members of the University Community are entitled to work, learn, study and participate in all aspects of the University's life in an environment of safety and respect.

University staff members and other persons covered by this Policy will:

- a) Act in ways that are consistent with the role and guiding values of the University (attached as Annex 1);
- b) Act in a collegial and respectful manner and demonstrate sensitivity to the diversity of the University community;
- c) Regulate their own conduct so the work and activities of Members of the University Community are not impeded or prejudiced;
- d) Act with integrity and in a professional manner;
- e) Carry out their duties competently and in accordance with all University policies, statutes and procedures; and
- f) When holding a position of seniority or authority, act in ways which ensure these standards are upheld and which demonstrate sensitivity to unequal degrees of power.

12.4 SEEKING ASSISTANCE FROM THE ASSOCIATE DEAN

It is expected that in the first instance, reasonable efforts will be made within the candidate's School to resolve any difficulty or dispute internally. This may involve the Postgraduate Coordinator, the Head of School or other members of staff. Where the School finds itself unable to bring a dispute to a satisfactory resolution, the Postgraduate Coordinator has a duty to refer the matter, in writing, to the Associate Dean, following consultation with the candidate and the Supervisor. Where a candidate or Supervisor feels that satisfactory resolution has not been achieved, or is reluctant to discuss the problem within the School, he/she may go directly to the Associate Dean. The Associate Dean should keep the School's Postgraduate Coordinator informed of all developments.

12.5 SEEKING ASSISTANCE FROM OUTSIDE THE FACULTY

The Organiser Welfare at the Victoria University of Wellington Students' Association is available to offer advice to any student experiencing difficulties, or to act on their behalf. Candidates may also wish to discuss a problem with the Senior Academic Policy Advisor (on academic matters covered by the [Academic Grievance Policy](#)), or the [Student Interest and Disputes Resolution Advisor](#) (on matters covered by the *Staff Conduct Policy* or the *Student Conduct Statute*). Services within the Student Services Group (such as Student Counselling Service) may also be used at any time.

12.6 RESOLVING ADMINISTRATIVE DIFFICULTIES

Candidates, Supervisors and Postgraduate Coordinators should contact the Manager, Student and Academic Services, directly to discuss any administrative difficulties or disputes.

12.7 FORMAL GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

Formal procedures set out in the [Student Conduct Statute](#) and the [Staff Conduct Policy](#) should be used only where other methods of resolving conflict have proven ineffectual or are considered inappropriate. It is the policy of the University that all disciplinary procedures conform to the principles of natural justice. Various procedures have been adopted in the [Statute](#) and the [Policy](#) to safeguard the rights of individuals in this respect.

Where all appropriate channels have been exhausted and dissatisfaction with the outcome remains, a candidate may invoke formal grievance procedures. This must be done in writing and should include details of all informal procedures that have been followed to date. Grievances relating to academic disadvantage are considered under the [Academic Grievance Policy](#) and should be submitted in writing to the Director of the Academic Office. Grievances relating to staff or student misconduct are considered under the [Staff Conduct Policy](#) or the [Student Conduct Statute](#), and should be submitted to the relevant Pro Vice-Chancellor. Administrative disputes that have not been resolved to the candidate's satisfaction by the [Manager, Student and Academic Services](#), may also be referred in writing to the [Pro Vice-Chancellor and Dean of the Faculty](#).