



TUS

**Technological University of the Shannon:
Midlands Midwest**

Ollscoil Teicneolaíochta na Sionainne:
Lár Tíre Iarthar Láir

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TUS Postgraduate Research Regulations 2023 – 2026



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Table of Contents

1	Principles, Governance and Policy	6
1.1	Purpose	6
1.1.1	Interpretation of regulations	7
1.1.2	Updating of regulations	7
1.2	Governance of Research Degree Provision	8
1.2.1	Academic Council	8
1.2.2	Postgraduate Studies & Research Sub-Committee	8
1.2.3	Research Ethics Committee	8
1.2.4	Graduate School	9
1.2.5	Graduate School Board	9
1.2.6	Responsibilities of the Faculty	9
1.2.7	Organisational and Reporting Structure of Graduate Studies in TUS	10
2	Award Types	10
2.1	Structured Learning	10
2.2	Masters Programme Types	10
2.3	Doctoral Programme Types	11
2.3.1	Structured PhDs	11
2.4	Qualification Requirements	12
2.4.1	Criteria for Award of Degree of Masters	12
2.4.2	Criteria for Award of Doctor of Philosophy	15
2.5	Collaborative Provision and Joint awards	17
2.6	Regulations Applying to Group Research Degree Programmes	17
2.7	Change in Research Degree Programme	17
3	Programme Development and Approval	18
3.1	Entry requirements	19
3.1.1	Masters by Research	19
3.1.2	PhD Direct Entry	19
4	Supervision	20
4.1	Qualification of Research Supervisors	21
4.2	Qualification of Co-supervisors	22
4.3	Supervisor Training and Support	22
4.4	Supervisor Responsibilities	22
4.5	Change in Supervisor	24
4.6	Complaints and Conflict Resolution	24

5	Studentship	24
5.1	Induction	24
5.2	Individual Development Plan and Thesis Planning	25
5.3	Research Student Responsibilities	26
5.4	Research Students CPD	27
6	Application and Registration	27
6.1	Application	27
6.2	Registration	28
6.2.1	Recognition of Prior Learning	29
6.2.2	Dual Registration	29
6.2.3	Change in Registration Status	29
6.3	Student Residency Status	30
6.4	Sanction	30
6.5	Leave of Absence and Withdrawal	30
6.6	Termination	31
6.7	Re-Application for Registration	31
7	Progression, Confirmation & Transfer	32
7.1.1	Research Progression Review Panel	32
7.1.2	Annual Research Progression Review	32
7.1.3	Confirmation to PhD Register and Transfer from Masters to PhD Register	33
7.1.4	Appeals Process	35
8	Examination	35
8.1	Examiner qualifications	35
8.1.1	Criteria for the Appointment of External Examiners	35
8.1.2	Criteria for the Appointment of Internal Examiners	36
8.1.3	Independent Chair	37
8.2	Research Postgraduate Examination Board	37
8.3	Thesis types and specifications	38
8.4	Examination procedures	38
8.4.1	Assessment Criteria for the Degree of Masters	38
8.4.2	Assessment Criteria for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy	39
8.4.3	Examination of Performed/Exhibited Elements and of Composition	39
8.4.4	Supervisor Availability	40
8.5	Preparation of Examiner Summary Report	40

9	Reviews and Disputes	42
9.1	Procedures for a Review	42
10	Conferment and post-graduation	43
10.1	Career development and maintenance of contact	43
10.2	Revocation of degrees	43
11	Related TUS Policies and Documents	44

1 Principles, Governance and Policy

As a new Technological University (TU), Technological University of the Shannon: Midlands Midwest (hereafter referred to as TUS or the Technological University) recognises that the legacy systems and processes of the parent institutions are no longer fit for purpose as the Technological University evolves into a research active institution on the lines proposed in the TURN report. The TURN report set out a series of specific recommendations centred upon the three thematic areas identified as the essential building blocks for successful TUs:

1. The prioritisation of capital investment in TUs and funding for integrated multi-campus digital infrastructure;
2. Investment in research capacity building in the form of developing researcher human capital, facilitating research activity and opportunities for existing staff and implementing a new researcher career development and employment framework, addressing infrastructural deficits and prioritising research strategies within TUs exploiting fully the mutually supporting roles of teaching and research;
3. The expansion of institutional autonomy and support for reform through the implementation of TU-apposite career structures with the support of the Department of Education and Skills, the reform of the grant allocation model to accommodate TUs, the creation of post-designation TU funding streams and the creation of a borrowing framework for TUs.

The regulations demonstrate the ambition of TUS to grow postgraduate research activity. New structures to support this activity are proposed requiring dedicated financial and human resourcing commensurate with the ambition of TUS. An underpinning principle of the endeavour to boost research activity, therefore, is that of resourcing following the student.

1.1 Purpose

The following regulations define TUS's General Policy and Criteria for Postgraduate Research Degrees. TUS operates mutually supporting processes and procedures to promote and maintain high quality research. In the context of these guidelines, '*research*' covers a wide variety of activities but always represents a careful study or investigation based on a systematic understanding and critical awareness of knowledge. It covers innovative work in the whole range of academic, scientific, technological, and professional fields, business, humanities, and creative and digital arts. In all of these contexts, '*research*' is understood to involve the integration of rigour, reflection and critique.

Each Research Degree Programme (RDP) is distinct and should be considered individually beyond the point where the thesis/exegesis (or equivalent) has been submitted. This is because for a supervised RDP, unlike a taught programme, a specific learning outcome can only be determined after the programme is complete.

Supervised RDPs at Level 9 and at Level 10 are assessed in accordance with the Quality Assurance (QA) Guidelines by Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) for providers of research degrees and related services¹. These Guidelines, published by QQI in 2017, are “statutory” guidelines in accordance with the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act, 2012.

1.1.1 Interpretation of regulations

The Vice President Academic Affairs & Registrar shall ensure that these RDP Regulations are implemented. In the event of any changes to, disagreement or conflict with regard to the implementation or interpretation of any or all of the Regulations, the matter shall be referred to the Vice President Academic Affairs & Registrar, whose ruling shall be final.

These Regulations apply in each Faculty and Department of TUS. In cases of any differences between these Regulations and other documents, the VP Academic Affairs & Registrar will decide which TUS Policy/Procedure shall apply. An individual Faculty of TUS may stipulate specific regulatory requirements over and above those specified herein, insofar as such proposed additional requirements do not in any way conflict with or compromise the TU Regulations detailed below. Such additional requirements may be implemented in conjunction with these regulations by the Faculty concerned and only that Faculty provided the requirement(s) are approved by the Postgraduate Studies & Research Sub-Committee/Academic Council, and are clearly communicated to both supervisors and research students. The requirements may only be rescinded by a decision of the Academic Council. Specific regulations of this format will be kept by the Office of Vice President of Academic Affairs & Registrar.

1.1.2 Updating of regulations

Regulations for research degrees at TUS are subject to periodic review as required by the Academic Council. This Regulations document will be reviewed in September 2024 and once every three years thereafter unless otherwise required.

¹QQI 2017 Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines developed by QQI for Providers of Research Degree Programmes <https://www.qqi.ie/sites/default/files/media/file-uploads/Research%20Degree%20Programmes%20QA%20Guidelines.pdf>

1.2 Governance of Research Degree Provision

1.2.1 Academic Council

The Academic Council is responsible for overseeing all aspects relating to the academic activities of the Technological University. As such, all graduate programmes come within the purview of the Council including procedures, standards, and academic content. The Council is free to establish any such committees to assist it in fulfilling its functions in this regard.

The Governing Body has responsibility for governance of the functions of Academic Council under Section 17 of the TU Act (2018). Academic Council makes recommendations to the TU on programmes for the development of research - Section 17 (3) (d).

1.2.2 Postgraduate Studies & Research Sub-Committee

To this end TUS Academic Council will establish a Postgraduate Studies & Research Sub-Committee which shall be responsible for ensuring coherence and complementarity between the RDI functions of the TU and its graduate research agenda, and will *inter alia* advise the Council on the following matters:

- a) The structure of graduate research degree programmes at Masters and Doctoral level;
- b) The establishment, role and ongoing development of a Graduate School;
- c) Such matters as may be from time to time referred to it by the Academic Council.

1.2.3 Research Ethics Committee

The Research Ethics Committee is an integral part of the overall TUS research governance ecosystem and is tasked with the maintenance and oversight of the TUS Research Integrity Policy and TUS Ethics Policy. Communicating directly to the Academic Council, the Research Ethics Committee will be responsible for ensuring the performance of research at TUS to the highest standards, and for ensuring the accuracy and authenticity of the research record in publications and elsewhere. Decisions of the Research Ethics Committee will be conveyed to the Academic Council for noting, rather than approval, and simultaneously to the Graduate School which will be responsible for their dissemination to Faculty. In accordance with the National Policy Statement and the National Forum on Research Integrity, research integrity disciplinary issues will be dealt with by a senior official with the title of

Research Integrity Officer (RIO). The processes for investigation of research misconduct are outlined in the TUS Research Integrity Policy.

1.2.4 Graduate School

TUS will establish a Graduate School to be headed by a Dean of Graduate Studies. The Dean of Graduate Studies will be responsible for the overall management of the Graduate School and all postgraduate research students and will manage the interface between the Graduate School and all other Faculties, Departments and Research Institutes/Centres in the Technological University via the Research Committees.

In order to further the Doctoral provision of TUS, the Graduate School will take responsibility for the creation of a framework which will enable the development of Professional Doctorates by the Faculties. This will be a predominantly taught programme augmented by a research component with a relevant vocationally related project. The aim of the Professional Doctorate is one of enhancing the professional competence of the student. This can be on an individual or cohort basis.

1.2.5 Graduate School Board

As with the other Faculties in TUS, the Graduate School will be managed and coordinated by a Graduate School Board. The Board will consist of representatives of the Faculty Deans, Department Heads which sponsor graduate research studies, Heads of Research Institutes/Centres, dedicated research support roles and research supervisors. The exact numbers on this committee and the meeting quorum will be set out in Graduate School Board procedures. At least two postgraduate research students will be elected to this Board.

1.2.6 Responsibilities of the Faculty

The Faculty remains the key focus of graduate research activity in the TU and the centre of study of the graduate student in the TU. The role of the Graduate School is specific to postgraduate student administration, while the research activity remains with each Faculty. Each Faculty will establish a Research Committee (RC) to oversee graduate research within the Faculty, the functions of which are outlined below.

The RC will be chaired by the Faculty Dean or their nominee. The membership of the RC will reflect the research activity and graduate research programmes within the Faculty on a contemporaneous basis.

1.2.7 Organisational and Reporting Structure of Graduate Studies in TUS

The organisational and reporting structure of graduate studies in TUS reports into the Academic Council through the Postgraduate Studies & Research Subcommittee. The Graduate School and each Faculty will be represented on the subcommittee. Regular reports on Research Ethics and from Research Committees will be considered by the subcommittee.

2 Award Types

2.1 Structured Learning

Reflecting the transformative and innovative character of the new TU, TUS will actively build upon its existing research programme provision at Masters level and promote the development and range of its Doctorate provision.

In order to embed key skills required for research performance and employability, TUS will require all research students to undertake and complete taught components as part of their research programme. Taught components will cover three categories of skills:

- Research Skills – to build research proficiency expertise;
- Disciplinary Specific Skills – to build subject matter expertise;
- Transferable Skills – to build personal and professional skills.

2.2 Masters Programme Types

Masters through research will be offered in the following areas:

Master of Arts (MA) / Master of Science (MSc) / Master of Business (MBus) / Master of Engineering (MEng), Master of Law (LLM)

The Masters by research will consist of 120 ECTS credits of which 15 credits will be taught modules. A pass grade is required in all taught elements of the course. The programme can be conducted either on a minimum of 12 months full-time, or equivalent on part-time basis.

The 15 ECTS credits of structured learning required by research Masters students by the end of their programme of study, are as follows:

15 ECTS credits of Research Skills:

- Research Methodology (5 ECTS)

- Research Ethics (5 ECTS)
- Academic Writing (5 ECTS)

Students who transfer from the Masters to the PhD register will carry forward structured learning credits attained on the Masters programme. TUS will also make provision for Professional Masters programmes. As these are primarily taught programmes, the Regulations governing taught Masters programmes will apply here.

2.3 Doctoral Programme Types

2.3.1 Structured PhDs

These regulations apply to the Doctor in Philosophy (PhD) – a research-based programme with a focus on the generation of new knowledge (including PhD by publication/articles-based PhD thesis) and including PhDs which are focused on excellence in creative endeavour. PhDs which require taught modules, are referred to as ‘Structured’ PhDs.

TUS will require all PhD students undertaking a Doctorate to complete a minimum of 30 ECTS credits of such learning by the end of their programme of study. While the taught training requirements of students will be determined by the supervisor(s) and student in accordance with the requirements of the individual students/programmes, and will form the basis of the individual study plan, the ECTS Credits will be drawn from the following structure: 15 ECTS Credits of Research Skills

- Research Methodology (5 ECTS)
- Research Ethics (5 ECTS)
- Academic Writing (5 ECTS)

And a minimum of 15 ECTS Credits in any combination from:

Up to 15 ECTS Credits of Disciplinary Skills

or

Up to 15 ECTS Transferable Skills

Elective credits to complete the 30 ECTS minimum will be agreed by supervisor and student.

Records of the completion of individual credit bearing and training programmes should be noted by the student on their Individual study plan, and in the student record held by the Graduate School.

2.4 Qualification Requirements

2.4.1 Criteria for Award of Degree of Masters

The qualifications available to research students are Master of Arts (MA) / Master of Science (MSc) / Master of Business (MBus) / Master of Engineering (MEng), Master of Law (LLM).

TUS's Generic Standards for the Masters Degree sets the standard (of knowledge, skill and competence) to be acquired for the Masters Degree by research. The Masters Degree is awarded to a research student who has carried out a programme of research and has attained the standard specified by TUS in accordance with the level indicators and award-type descriptors of the National Framework of Qualifications. Research Masters graduates should have a mastery of principles and theory of their discipline, competence in appropriate research methods, an ability to manage complexity, integrate knowledge and may contribute to the literature in a field. Required taught modules must also be completed.

The overall standard at level 9 of the framework was established in framework for the development, recognition, and award of qualifications in Ireland in 2003², which remains the standard as set out by QQI in Ireland's Framework of Good Practice for Research Degree Programmes in 2020³.

“Learning outcomes at this level relate to the demonstration of knowledge and understanding which is the forefront of a field of learning. The outcomes relate to the application of knowledge, understanding and problem-solving abilities in new or unfamiliar contexts related to a field of study. The outcomes

² QQI 2003 A framework for the development, recognition and award of qualifications in Ireland - Determinations for the Outline National Framework of Qualifications <https://www.qqi.ie/sites/default/files/media/file-uploads/Determinations%20for%20the%20outline%20National%20Framework%20of%20Qualifications.pdf>

³ QQI 2020 Ireland's Framework of Good Practice for Research Degree Programmes <https://www.qqi.ie/sites/default/files/media/file-uploads/Ireland%E2%80%99s%20Framework%20of%20Good%20Practice%20Research%20Degree%20Programmes.pdf>

are associated with an ability to integrate knowledge, handle complexity and formulate judgements. Outcomes associated with level 9 would link with employment as a senior professional or manager with responsibility for the work outputs of teams”.

Examiners are required to assess the student using the thesis as evidence and satisfy themselves that the student has attained the standard. The examiners are required to report under each of the eight learning outcome strands (knowledge, skill and competence) described in the standard. To recommend the award the examiners must be convinced that the student has attained all of the outcomes. The examiners, in cases of doubt, may request a *viva voce*.

Standard to be attained by the student:

Examiners should assess and may recommend the award of Degree of Master (Research) in accordance with the general criteria outlined in Table 1.

Table 1 TUS Adopted Award Standard

Title Name	Masters Degree Master of Arts (MA) / Master of Science (MSc) / Master of Business (MBus) / Master of Engineering (MEng), Master of Law (LLM)
Purpose	This is a multi-purpose award-type. The knowledge, skill and competence acquired are relevant to personal development, participation in society and community, employment, and access to additional education and training.
Level	9
Volume	Large
Knowledge – breadth	A systematic understanding of knowledge at, or informed by, the forefront of a field of learning
Knowledge – kind	A critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, generally informed by the forefront of a field of learning
Know-how and skill – range	Demonstrate a range of standard and specialised research or equivalent tools and techniques
Know-how and skill – selectivity	Select from complex and advanced skills across a field of learning; develop new skills to a high level, including novel and emerging techniques
Competence – context	Act in a wide and often unpredictable variety of professional levels and ill-defined contexts
Competence – role	Take significant responsibility for the work of individuals and groups; lead and initiate activity
Competence – learning to learn	Learn to self-evaluate and take responsibility for continuing academic/professional development
Competence – insight	Scrutinise and reflect on social norms and relationships and act to change them
Progression & Transfer	Progression to programmes leading to Doctoral Degree (Level 10), or to another Masters Degree, or to a Postgraduate Diploma (9)

The degree of Masters by Research is an NFQ Level 9 Major Award and is awarded without classification - (recognised as equivalent to an honour classification for progression purposes).

2.4.2 Criteria for Award of Doctor of Philosophy

The degree of Doctor of Philosophy at Level 10 in the National Framework of Qualifications is available to research students who successfully complete a Research Degree Programme (RDP). To be eligible for consideration for the award of a Level 10 (Doctoral) degree, the learner must accumulate the requisite credits as specified in the Academic Regulations for Research Degree programmes.

The Doctor of Philosophy award is made on the basis of knowledge, skill and competency normally gained through a validated supervised RDP resulting in the production of a thesis/exegesis and artistic/creative work/product (where appropriate). The Doctor of Philosophy award is conferred for advanced levels of achievement, in which the research student demonstrates outstanding scholarship and ability. The research student must demonstrate that they have conducted original, independent research, have a broad knowledge of a particular field of study, a comprehensive knowledge of the specialist area upon which their research is focused, and have made a novel contribution to knowledge in their field. Required taught modules must also be completed.

The overall standard at level 10 of the framework as set out in QQI documentation:

“Learning outcomes at this level relate to the discovery and development of new knowledge and skills and delivering findings at the frontiers of knowledge and application. Further outcomes at this level relate to specialist skills and transferable skills required for managing such as the abilities to critique and develop organisational structures and initiate change.”

Examiners are required to assess the student (*viva voce*) using the thesis as evidence and satisfy themselves that the student has attained the standard for the award. The examiners are required to report under each of the eight learning outcome strands (knowledge, skill and competence) described in the standard.

Standard to be attained by the student:

Examiners should assess and may recommend the award of Degree of Doctor of philosophy in accordance with the general criteria outlined in Table 2.

Table 2 TUS Adopted Award Standard

Title Name	Doctoral Degree Doctor in Philosophy (PhD)
Purpose	This is a multi-purpose award-type. The knowledge, skill and competence acquired are relevant to personal development, participation in society and community, employment, and access to additional education and training.
Level	10
Volume	Large
Knowledge – breadth	A systematic acquisition and understanding of a substantial body of knowledge which is at the forefront of a field of learning
Knowledge – kind	The creation and interpretation of new knowledge, through original research, or other advanced scholarship, of a quality to satisfy review by peers
Know-how and skill – range	Demonstrate a significant range of the principal skills, techniques, tools, practices and/or materials which are associated with a field of learning; develop new skills, techniques, tools, practices and/or materials
Know-how and skill – selectivity	Respond to abstract problems that expand and redefine existing procedural knowledge
Competence – context	Exercise personal responsibility and largely autonomous initiative in complex and unpredictable situations, in professional or equivalent contexts
Competence – role	Communicate results of research and innovation to peers; engage in critical dialogue; lead and originate complex social processes
Competence – learning to learn	Learn to critique the broader implications of applying knowledge to particular contexts
Competence – insight	Scrutinise and reflect on social norms and relationships and lead action to change them

A level 10 (Doctoral) degree is awarded without classification.

2.5 Collaborative Provision and Joint awards

In line with TUS Policy on Collaborative Provision, TUS encourages co-operation with other HEIs, industrial, commercial, professional or research establishments for the purposes of research leading to Research Degree awards. Such co-operation is intended:

- a) To encourage outward-looking and relevant research;
- b) To extend the research student's own experience and perspectives of the work;
- c) To provide a wider range of experience and expertise to assist in the development of the project;
- d) To be mutually beneficial;
- e) Where appropriate, to enable the research student to become a member of a research community.

In cases where there is an external link, a formal letter/Memorandum of Association from the collaborating establishment confirming agreement to the project plan, objectives and methodologies, arrangements for sponsorship, financial and other support, access to facilities and intellectual property assignment, should accompany the research student's application for registration.

2.6 Regulations Applying to Group Research Degree Programmes

Where a research student's research forms part of a group project, the application should clearly indicate the extent of the research student's individual contribution and the extent to which the work is proposed to be carried out in collaboration with others. In such cases each individually registered RDP must in itself be distinguishable for the purposes of assessment and be appropriate for the award being sought. The RDP application must clearly indicate each individual's contribution and its relationship to the group project.

2.7 Change in Research Degree Programme

Where new circumstances make a major change to the research project desirable during the programme of the work, a written supplementary application setting out the proposed changes should be submitted on the appropriate form to the Graduate School Office (GSO) together with a letter of support from the principal supervisor for approval of the Academic Council. A letter to confirm approval or otherwise will be forwarded to the research student by the GSO.

3 Programme Development and Approval

The approval of a postgraduate research programme in TUS can take two forms. In the first instance, TUS offers a specifically designed research-based programme within a particular disciplinary or inter-disciplinary field where there is critical mass in the Faculty to deliver the programme. A submission for approval from a Department or sub Department unit such as Research Institute/Centre will specify:

- a) The discipline or sub-discipline area in which the Programme will be offered;
- b) The critical mass of research active expertise within the TU;
- c) Research networks which can be brought to bear on the proposed programme including emeritus researcher in Ireland/overseas;
- d) The pool of principal supervisors and co-supervisors available to the programme
- e) The availability of the requisite suite of taught modules in the core disciplinary and non-core transferable skills modules;
- f) The necessary financial and infrastructure supports e.g. labs present in the Faculty or wider TU to support the planned programme of research.

Any such programme proposals will be submitted through the Faculty Research Committee for recommendation to the Graduate School for approval by the Academic Council. The proposal will include:

- a) Programme Name, i.e. Masters/PhD in _____;
- b) Demonstration of the critical mass in the Faculty to supervise and deliver the programme;
- c) Resource requirements of the programme - staffing, financial, laboratory, library;
- d) Alignment of the programme with the TUS Strategic Plan;
- e) Likely demand for the programme;
- f) External collaboration (where relevant);
- g) Professional accreditation (where relevant);
- h) Taught syllabus;

The second format is where a student applies to undertake postgraduate research in the TU, whether at Masters or PhD level. If the student meets the criteria for entry, the application is considered by the Research Committee for recommendation to the Graduate School for approval by the Academic Council.

The proposal will include:

- a) Student application form;
- b) Name of principal supervisors and co-supervisors;
- c) The availability of the requisite suite of taught modules in the core disciplinary and non-core transferable skills modules;
- d) The necessary financial and infrastructure supports e.g. labs present in the Faculty or wider TU to support the planned programme of research.

3.1 Entry requirements

3.1.1 Masters by Research

A student for the Masters by research programme will normally have achieved a 2:1 grade in the relevant discipline in a Level 8 Honours award. Other access routes to this programme include:

- a) Primary degree together with three years business/industrial experience in a cognate discipline field;
- b) Primary Degree together with three years community/voluntary service or activism in a cognate field;
- c) International students with a 2:1 grade in their primary degree and has a Level 6 in the IELTS or equivalent.

While all Masters by research students will be admitted through the relevant Department, approval for admission will be subject to consideration by the relevant Research Committee which will make recommendations for acceptance or otherwise to the Graduate School for approval by Academic Council. Students who have completed 30 credits and have achieved at least 60% in completed assessment exercises, may be eligible to transfer on to the Doctoral programme as outlined in the section dealing with transfer from Masters to PhD Register.

3.1.2 PhD Direct Entry

There are two direct entry routes:

- a) undergraduate award direct entry; and
- b) Masters award direct entry.

All students with at least a 2:1 honours undergraduate degree in a relevant discipline are eligible for direct entry to a PhD programme. All such applications will be

considered by the Graduate School, in consultation with the relevant Research Committee. Similarly, all students with a Masters by research in a relevant discipline are eligible for direct entry to a PhD programme. Students who have completed a taught Masters programme may apply for PhD admittance if they have achieved at least a second class honours award in the Masters programme.

While all research students will be admitted through the relevant Department, approval for admission will be subject to consideration by the relevant Research Committee which will make recommendations for acceptance or otherwise to the Graduate School for approval by Academic Council.

4 Supervision

Supervision of research students should occur within the framework of a Faculty/Department or of a recognised Research Institutes/Centres or group within a Department. The supervisor is responsible for providing guidance on the research carried out by the student. All research students will have a minimum of two supervisors - one principal supervisor who will have full responsibility for the oversight and management of the student's research. A co-supervisor who will assist the principal supervisor and where necessary provide a complementary skill set to the principal supervisor. Both supervisors will have responsibility for supervising the research student on a regular and frequent basis.

- a) When supervisor(s) are being nominated, due cognisance should be taken of any potential conflicts of interest, including those of a personal, research or professional nature;
- b) A principal supervisor should normally be a permanent academic staff member of the TUS Faculty in which the research student is registered (including Heads of Department, Deans of Faculty, Senior Academic or other academic staff member) of Research Masters/Research Doctoral status, or appropriately qualified members of staff of Research Institutes/Centres within the Faculty;
- c) Be attached to a Faculty;
- d) A full-time academic staff member of TUS on a temporary contract of two years or greater, providing that the appointed co-supervisor(s) fulfil the regulation above and will assume primary supervisor duties if the original primary supervisors contract ends.

4.1 Qualification of Research Supervisors

Principal supervisors at both Doctorate and Masters level will be active researchers in the broad area of the student's topic, having a record of peer review publications of international standing or thematically relevant dissemination activities. In addition, principal supervisors will not be currently registered for a postgraduate research award in a cognate area and at the same level as the student.

For Doctoral Degrees, the principal supervisor shall be:

The holder of a Doctoral Degree;

For PhD Degrees specifically, the principal supervisor shall be:

The holder of a PhD Degree

For Masters Degrees, the principal supervisor shall be:

The holder of a Masters Degree or higher;

Where a Principal Supervisor has not previously supervised a research degree to completion, a Mentor Supervisor will be added to the supervisory team. The Mentor Supervisor will advise the Principal Supervisor on any challenges encountered, without direct involvement in supervising the research student.

In addition to the supervisor(s), an advisor or advisors may be proposed to contribute some specialised knowledge or a link with an external organisation.

The Graduate School may require an additional co-supervisor in the case of supervisors whose employment contracts end prior to the anticipated completion of the research programme.

Where a supervisor retires or resigns from the staff of TUS, provision will be made for the supervisor to continue in that role as the first preference. If that is not possible for whatever reason, a new supervisor will be proposed to the Graduate School by the Research Committee.

Where a supervisor is unable to continue to supervise the assigned research student (for any reason), the Research Committee shall propose the revised arrangements for the supervision of the student to the Graduate School for recommendation, and to Academic Council for approval.

A person who is registered for an RDP at TUS is ineligible to act as a supervisor for a research student at TUS but may act as an advisor.

4.2 Qualification of Co-supervisors

Co-supervisors should be specialists in the research area. Where a co-supervisor is not a member of TUS academic staff, their CV indicating their qualifications, supervisory experience and any publications should be submitted with the student's application, for recommendation by the Research Committee.

Co-supervisors at Masters level will normally have at least a Masters qualification or equivalent. Co-supervisors on Doctoral programmes will normally have a Doctoral qualification.

4.3 Supervisor Training and Support

All supervisors, whether principal or co-supervisors must have taken appropriate training in supervision whether provided by the TU itself or validated by an alternative HEI. TUS is in process of seeking approval for a Masters Degree in Higher Education Research to support the training of research supervisors in the Technological University and outside of it.

Early career supervisors will be provided with a mentor from the discipline area from within TUS or outside of it. The mentor will advise on an on-going basis on any problems or challenges which the supervisors is encountering.

4.4 Supervisor Responsibilities

The principal supervisor is responsible for the academic supervision of the research student. Specifically, principal supervisors should:

- a) Make adequate time available to maintain contact with their research student, as timetabled;
- b) Be accessible to their research student for consultation, advice and assistance and should meet them on a regular basis during the academic year, as timetabled;
- c) Maintain a written record of all interaction with the student. TUS will provide a dedicated, centralised system which will log interactions and progress between supervisors and students which will form the basis of the staged review report to be submitted to the Research Progression Review Panel;
- d) Ensure registered research students are attending and actively engaged in their RDPs;

- e) Monitor the progress of the research student's work by setting appropriate academic standards and milestones;
- f) Identify insufficient progress as early as possible in order to allow adequate time for re-orientation and address by the research student;
- g) Notify the Graduate School Office and relevant Head of Department/Dean of Faculty of any breach of TUS Policies and Procedures by, or any breakdown in communication with the research student;
- h) Assess performance and provide constructive feedback;
- i) Provide guidance to the research student on attendance at conferences and seminars;
- j) Normally co-author a minimum of one peer reviewed publication/output (presentation/IDF/Patent application) per annum with each of their research students;
- k) Formally adjudicate on the research student's progress by providing an annual report to the Research Progression Review Panel on the student's progress;
- l) Provide their recommendation on changes to candidature and transfer between Registers, where appropriate;
- m) Organise, attend and organise minute taking of the meeting with the research student, relevant Head of Department and Dean of Faculty to explain and discuss the Transfer/Progression Examination and/or Final Examination procedures;
- n) Nominate Examiners for recommendation by the Research Committee and approval of Academic Council to assess the research student's final thesis/exegesis/exhibition work;
- o) Review and provide guidance to the research student on drafts of the thesis/exegesis/exhibition work;
- p) Attend at a *viva voce* where appropriate;
- q) Liaise with the Research Committee on all aspects of the student's assessment and progression;
- r) Propose changes in supervision arrangements where appropriate.

Supervisors are expected to:

- a) Adhere to TUS Policies and Procedures;
- b) Actively publish, attend and present at conferences;

- c) Collaborate with external organisations;
- d) Apply for external research funding.

4.5 Change in Supervisor

If a research student requests a change in supervisor and/or if a staff member wishes to cease supervision, this request should be put forward on the appropriate form, accompanied by letter of support from the current supervisory team to the Research Committee for recommendation to the Graduate School and approval by Academic Council.

4.6 Complaints and Conflict Resolution

The existing complaints procedures in the TUS Student Complaints and Problem Resolution Procedure 2022 – 2025 (Approved June 2022), will apply for students registered on Research Degree Programmes.

If considered more appropriate by the student or supervisor, a conflict resolution process may be instigated. The Dean of Graduate Studies will instigate the conflict resolution procedure for students and supervisors in the School. Complaints about the adequacy of supervision will not be considered once the thesis has been presented for examination.

5 Studentship

5.1 Induction

TUS acknowledges that research student success is linked to a sense of belonging to the research community in a discipline or HEI, to an ability to quickly understand the norms and expectations of that community and to the quality of the research community. TUS endeavours to ensure that research students are provided with an environment conducive to successful completion of their research, and to the training and career development of the student.

In order to assist students to become familiar with the TUS research community, all research students are required to attend the annual induction programme for postgraduate researchers. Additional to this, some faculties or departments may require students registered in their departments to attend short subject-specific induction courses.

The Research Postgraduate Induction Programme aims to:

- a) Provide orientation including information on Student Support Services, Careers Service, Computer Services, Health & Safety, Library Services, Grants & Fees and any other relevant support functions;
- b) Introduce research students to the TUS Research Community, including existing research students in disciplines other than their own, Postgraduate Society, Research Management, and Senior Researchers in TUS's Research Institutes/Centres and Groups;
- c) Make research students aware that they are required to be conversant with TUS regulations, procedures and standards with respect to research and scholarship;
- d) Inform research students that there are standard norms and methods for carrying out research including ethical considerations and plagiarism, the presenting of research in the form of theses/exegeses, articles for journals, reviews etc;
- e) Encourage research students to embrace good research practice;
- f) Present research students with information on a variety of aspects of research management, skills training and includes presentations from postgraduates who have recently completed their research;
- g) Introduce students to Student Union postgraduate representatives and the supports the Student Union can provide to students;
- h) Promote a good research environment for research students, thereby pre-empting academic isolation.

5.2 Individual Development Plan and Thesis Planning

TUS will provide a dedicated, centralised system which will log interactions between supervisors and students which will form the basis of the research review report to be submitted to the Research Review Progression Panel.

Research students are issued with an Individual Development Planner (IDP) for identification of research, discipline specific and transferable skills training needs at Research Postgraduate Induction. The IDP is completed in collaboration with the principal supervisor, and the research student attends appropriate training sessions provided by GSO.

The Generic Thesis Planner, which is also provided at Research Postgraduate Induction, is a tool used by the research student and principal supervisor during thesis preparation.

5.3 Research Student Responsibilities

The research student must:

- a) Remain in good financial standing with the Technological University;
- b) Attend and actively participate in the provided Research Postgraduate Induction, annual examination and assessment procedures training, Research Progression Review and other relevant training sessions identified by the student with their supervisory panel;
- c) Undertake mandatory and elective modules as agreed with their supervisor;
- d) Be conversant with and adhere to TUS rules and regulations governing research and awards by research, and must not undertake any research without prior appropriate approval being granted by TUS's Faculty Research Ethics sub-committee;
- e) Agree in advance with the supervisor(s) the programme of work, aims, objectives and timeframe for the proposed programme, including the nature and extent of the guidance expected;
- f) Conduct their programme of work in a professional and ethical manner in accordance with the TUS Research Integrity Policy and TUS Ethics Policy and comply with all relevant legislation, including but not limited to GDPR and TUS health and safety policy;
- g) Maintain an Individual Development Planner and a Generic Thesis Planner;
- h) Remain aware of the need to identify valuable Intellectual Property arising from all work carried out on their RDP and to protect it by appropriate recording in TUS laboratory/practice based notebook;
- i) Disseminate research findings in a manner consistent with best practice adhering to TUS's Research Publication Policy;
- j) Regularly attend and present at research seminars (local and/or external) at the direction of their principal supervisor;
- k) Agree a schedule of meetings with the supervisor(s) and arrangements for the evaluation of progress;
- l) Inform the supervisor(s) of any significant problems and difficulties encountered as early as possible;
- m) Participate as deemed appropriate in seminars or colloquia organised by Faculty;
- n) Submit a thesis/exegesis in accordance with the schedule of examinations of TUS;

- o) Ensure that the thesis/exegesis presentation format is in accordance with the TUS Regulations;
- p) Not initiate contact with External and/or Internal Examiner(s);
- q) Sign the TUS student-supervisor Memorandum of Understanding.

Students failing in this regard will have their registration reviewed under “Sanction” and/or “Termination” procedures (as appropriate).

5.4 Research Students CPD

The provision of a research-informed teaching environment is a stated TUS Strategic Priority. It is important therefore that postgraduate research students in TUS should both seek, and be facilitated with, various opportunities which allow them to bring their research activity and findings into the undergraduate classroom.

Postgraduate students in receipt of a TUS stipend may be allocated non-lecture delivery hours from their supervisor’s timetable. The nature and quantum of any such allocation should be agreed in advance through consultation between the student, principal supervisor and the principal supervisor’s Head of Department. Such consultation should seek to ensure that any such hours of delivery are consistent with the postgraduate student’s individual RDP and should be cognisant of the timeframe for completion for that student.

Postgraduate research students should not normally be allocated greater than 140 such hours over a single academic year in this manner.

6 Application and Registration

6.1 Application

TUS’s consideration of applications to Research Masters and Doctoral programmes is based on assessing the knowledge, skill and competence of each applicant who intends to seek registration as a research student. In all cases, the relevant Research Committee will consider all applications for RDPs in the Faculty and make a recommendation for acceptance or otherwise to the Graduate School. Applications to the relevant research postgraduate register will be considered for approval by Academic Council on recommendation from the Graduate School.

On successful completion of application procedures and approval by Academic Council, the applicant shall be enrolled on the relevant postgraduate degree at TUS. While students will normally enrol and register either in Semester 1 or Semester 2 of

each academic year, multiple times of entry will be facilitated, and approvals will occur throughout the year. Where relevant, postgraduate stipends would commence in line with TUS banner system.

Registration for part-time research may be permitted by TUS provided that students can attend the Technological University for such periods as are necessary for student induction, adequate supervision and completion of taught modules. Permission for such part-time registration, setting out all the circumstances, must be made at the time of application.

Research students on the full-time register who obtain other full-time employment after 12 months on the Masters degree register or three years on the PhD register may apply in writing to the Chair of the Graduate School for transfer to the part-time register for the remainder of their registration. Such applications must have the written support of the Principal Supervisor. Where transfer is affected, the new time limits apply from the original date of full-time registration.

6.2 Registration

To qualify for an advanced degree by research, students must be registered with TUS for a minimum period of time. The minimum period of registration for a Masters degree by research is one year (full-time equivalent) and for a PhD degree is three years (full-time equivalent) - which may include time spent pursuing a Masters RDP or a Masters, prior to transferring to the Doctoral register. Research students may also register on a part-time basis, with minimum registration related to full-time equivalence.

Students who do not present for examination in 4 years (full-time equivalent) for a Masters award or 6 years (full-time equivalent) for a Doctoral award will be required to re-register using the appropriate form, subject to successfully completing the annual progression process. Annual fees as appropriate will apply.

Where a research student is performing to the required level, but is likely to overrun the allowable time limit, they may apply to the Research Committee with the approval of their supervisor for an extension of the time limit for a maximum of 1 year (full-time equivalent) using the appropriate form. The outcome of the review of the student's circumstances will be forwarded to the student, and other relevant internal and external bodies as required. (e.g. R&IE, funding bodies etc.)

6.2.1 Recognition of Prior Learning

Where a student has been registered for research postgraduate studies at universities or institutions other than TUS, Academic Council on recommendation of the Research Committee shall determine the year of study the student enters the Masters or PhD programme subject to a minimum period of registration of one year at TUS and providing credit has not and will not be given by any other awarding body.

The RDP application should include details of the work already undertaken, the reason for the transfer and the expected date of completion. Where TUS accepts such an application, the research student will normally be required to complete a further programme of work approved by Academic Council.

6.2.2 Dual Registration

A research student shall not be eligible to register for a Degree of Masters (Research) or Degree of Doctor of Philosophy if simultaneously they are registered for another programme within TUS or another HEI, without the prior permission of the Academic Council for such dual registration. Instances where a research student may be permitted to register for another programme or module of study concurrently with the RDP registration, are that either the RDP registration or the other programme of study is by part-time study and that the dual registration either benefits or at a minimum does not detract from the research. A student seeking dual registration should apply on the appropriate form to the GSO for consideration by the Graduate School and approval of the Academic Council. A letter to confirm approval or otherwise will be forwarded to the student by the GSO. This restriction may not apply where a research student is undertaking a programme for the purposes of continuous professional development.

6.2.3 Change in Registration Status

Changes in registration status recommended by the HOD are brought to the Research Committee for approval and recommendation to the Graduate School. Changes to registration status may include:

- a) Application for a change in thesis title;
- b) Application for a change in registration mode from full-time to part-time and vice versa;
- c) Application to withdraw from a research degree programme.

A letter to confirm approval or otherwise will be forwarded to the research student by the GSO.

6.3 Student Residency Status

Students must be compliant with current government residency policy.

6.4 Sanction

A research student who is engaged in commercial or research activity other than that approved by the Academic Council, may be removed from the postgraduate register. Any research student engaged in activity which in the opinion of the Academic Council is either prejudicial to the successful completion of the research or deemed incompatible with the standards required of a research student for an advanced degree may be sanctioned.

Allegations of misconduct against a research student will be investigated in accordance with the principles of natural justice and in accordance with the procedure set out in the TUS Academic Regulations for Taught Programmes and/or the TUS Student Code of Conduct and Discipline, as appropriate.

6.5 Leave of Absence and Withdrawal

In special circumstances other than academic e.g. financial, medical or personal reasons a student may be granted a freeze of registration. A freeze of registration may last for up to a period of one year's leave of absence from the postgraduate register. Application should be made through the Research Committee using the appropriate form. Where the application is linked to personal issues including health, maternity, paternity, parental, adoptive, compassionate, carer's leave, processing of the application will be aligned with overarching HR policies and take cognisance of GDPR implications. Supervisors should indicate any academic, contractual or financial implications to the student when a freeze of registration is requested. In exceptional circumstances and with the agreement of the Research Committee this period may be extended up to a maximum of one year.

The outcome of the review of the student's circumstances will be forwarded to the student, and other relevant internal and external bodies as required (e.g. R&IE, funding bodies, etc.). The student's registration is deemed to be held at this point, and any time lapse will not count towards the minimum registration period required before submission. Fees for the period of leave of absence will not apply.

Prior to readmission to the Doctoral or Masters register, as applicable, the student must review in detail the work to date with their supervisor(s). Once the appropriate form has been completed and signed by the student, supervisor and Head of

Department, it should be presented for approval by the Research Committee and recommended to the Graduate School.

If through a combination of circumstances, research has been halted for a period of two years or more, in instances where the student's research or data has been superseded or any required facilities/resources are no longer available, the supervisor(s) and Head of Department will review any revised research proposal. Once the revised research proposal has been agreed and the Research Postgraduate Readmission Form has been completed and signed by the student, supervisor(s) and the Head of Department, it should be presented for approval by the Research Committee and recommended to the Graduate School.

In instances where the supervisory expertise in the original or new research area is unavailable, the Head of Department will recommend revised appropriate supervision arrangements. The recommendation will be reviewed for approval by the Research Committee, for recommendation to the Graduate School. On resumption of their studies, a research student who has completed the minimum registration period for their research degree must re-register and pay the appropriate academic fee.

6.6 Termination

The Research Committee may recommend to the Graduate School and Academic Council a termination of registration on foot of a review of the student's progress in accordance with the procedures specified in these Regulations. Examples include but are not limited to unsatisfactory progress illustrated in progress reports, disciplinary procedures being pursued, or a breach of Academic or Examination Regulations.

While every effort will be made to facilitate research students, in the case of a student who ceases communication with TUS and does not respond to efforts made to remain in communication, the student will not be approved to progress and will be removed from the relevant research postgraduate register.

In cases where a research student's registration has been terminated, should they wish to present for the relevant award at a future date, they may re-apply for registration as outlined in the next section.

6.7 Re-Application for Registration

The appropriate application form, signed by the proposed supervisory panel, Head of Department and Dean of Faculty, together with a letter of support from the principal

supervisor of the supervisory panel, should be submitted for consideration by the Research Committee and recommended to the Graduate School for approval of Academic Council. A letter to confirm approval or otherwise by the appropriate body will be forwarded to the research student by the GSO.

7 Progression, Confirmation & Transfer

7.1.1 Research Progression Review Panel

Each Research Committee will put in place a Research Progression Review Panel at Faculty level to ensure the student's progress is monitored on an ongoing basis. Normally this panel will be constituted prior to the summer examination board. Panels may also be convened at other times of the year to review research student performance, at the request of the Head of Department, supervisor or research student, with decisions reported back to the Research Committee and Graduate School. This staged progression report, will relate to relevant milestones achieved by the research student reflective of full-time and part-time registration status. Students who have been approved to freeze registration will not be put forward for the Research Progression Review Panel.

The Research Progression Review Panel will consist of the supervisor(s) and at least one independent panel member, nominated by the Dean of Faculty, who satisfies the criteria of appointment of supervisor. The Chairperson will be a research active academic who meets the criteria to be a principal supervisor on PhDs in TUS. The supervisor cannot act as Chairperson of the Research Progression Review Panel.

At the end of Year 1 the research student will complete either the Annual Research Progression Review (7.1.2 below) or a Confirmation to PhD Register/Transfer from Masters to PhD (7.1.3 below).

7.1.2 Annual Research Progression Review

The TUS dedicated, centralised system which logs interactions between supervisors and students will form the basis of the staged review report to be submitted to the Research Progression Review Panel. The panel may also require the research student to make a written presentation of their research and/or present their research to the panel. The Research Progression Review Panel's assessment of a research student's progress will take cognisance of the duration on the research register, full or part-time registration and, where applicable, the programme structure approved by TUS.

The purpose of Research Progression Review Panel is to adjudicate on whether or not sufficient progress has been maintained to enable the research student progress to the next stage of the research undertaking. The Panel's recommendation shall be one of the following:

- a) the student meets the criteria to progress to the subsequent Stage;
- b) the student does not meet the criteria to progress to the subsequent Stage and is referred to the Faculty Research Subcommittee.
 - Students who do not attend or engage with the progression process will be removed from the register.
 - Students who successfully progress to the next stage of study, are not guaranteed to gain an award.
 - Students on the Doctoral register may, with the written agreement of their supervisor(s), request that their registration be changed to the Masters register.
 - The research progression review process does not need to be undertaken by research students who have submitted a copy of their thesis for examination or those on an approved leave of absence.

7.1.3 Confirmation to PhD Register and Transfer from Masters to PhD Register

The panel shall be nominated by the Graduate School and be chaired by Independent Chairperson who is independent of the research student supervisory panel and shall include at least one External Examiner. The panel shall be convened to consider the Confirmation to the PhD Register or Transfer of a research student from the Masters to the PhD register, as relevant.

For both Confirmation and Transfer, the research student shall complete and submit a Written Report on their research and students are advised to discuss the content of the Confirmation or Transfer Report with their academic supervisor(s). The Panel shall require the research student to present their research in a *viva voce* to the panel.

In cases where the proposed research is being carried out in the context of a larger research programme, the research report should primarily focus on the student's individual project, except to put the student's project in context. In particular, the research proposal should seek to critically discuss how it will meet the criteria for the award of Degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Table 2).

Confirmation to PhD Register

The Confirmation Review will constitute a stringent process of academic assessment for all PhD students to confirm their continuation on the PhD register.

- a) For full-time PhD students the confirmation review shall normally be arranged within the first 12 months of registration;
- b) For part-time PhD students the confirmation review shall normally be arranged within the first 18 months of registration.

The Written Report will include:

- a) Substantial report on progress and achievements to date;
- b) Abstract (250 words) summarising the progress and achievements with respect to the original work plan;
- c) Minimum 5,000-word report on the research carried out to date.

Transfer from Masters to PhD Register

For transfer from a Master to the PhD Register, the panel will require the research student to make a written presentation of their research progress and proposal for further research at PhD level.

The Written Report will include:

- d) Substantial report on progress and achievements to date in Masters Project (append copy of original Masters Research proposal).
- e) Abstract (250 words) summarising the progress and achievements with respect to the original work plan.
- f) Minimum 10,000-word report on the research carried out to date.

For both Confirmation and Transfer, the precise format of the report will vary according to the nature of the research project but as a general guideline, may include:

1. An abstract;
2. Introductory sections including aims, formulation of research question(s) and theoretical or conceptual aspects of the research;
3. A literature review;
4. Proposed methodology including the design, sampling, data collection tools, data analysis technique(s) as well as ethical issues as relevant;
5. Work carried out including any alterations to the original work plan;
6. A section detailing future research objectives and plans;
7. Details of any publications/exhibitions to date;
8. A proposed timeline for the completion of the research;
9. A bibliography.

7.1.4 Appeals Process

The decision of the Research Progression Review Panel, Confirmation to PhD Register/Transfer from Masters to PhD Register Panel may be appealed. Students have the right to appeal the decision of these panels to the Board of Appeal, according to the procedures set out in the *Academic Council Bylaw 2 Board of Appeal*.

8 Examination

In the case of applications for final examination, the Principal Supervisor, on behalf of the supervisory panel, shall complete and submit An Intention to Submit for Examination Form. Only in exceptional circumstances may a student be facilitated in the absence of the support of their supervisory panel to submit an application for final examination. The RC must be notified of:

The documentation listed below must be submitted to the GS for notification to the Academic Council via the Graduate School at least six months in advance of the relevant Research Postgraduate Examination Board.

1. A fully completed and signed notice of intention to submit for examination form.
2. Confirmation that required ECTS have been achieved
3. Detailed Curricula Vitae for the proposed examiners.

The Graduate School shall ensure that the criteria for the appointment of Examiners and Independent Chair are fulfilled, together with achievement of ECTS credits.

8.1 Examiner qualifications

The supervisory team, via the Research Committee propose the external and internal examiners. CV's of proposed examiners will be provided to the Graduate School from the Research Committee.

8.1.1 Criteria for the Appointment of External Examiners

The External Examiner shall be independent of TUS, the research student and their supervisory panel, and any collaborating or sponsoring institution where appropriate. More than one External Examiner may be appointed if the research student is a staff member of TUS, the Student's RDP is multidisciplinary, or as decided by the Academic Council.

The External Examiner will be a specialist in the subject area, will be known for their contribution to, and will normally be currently active in research in the research student's discipline area. The External Examiner will have academic qualifications to at least the level of the award to be examined. In certain cases, an additional examiner with subject expertise may be appointed to the examination panel.

At least one Examiner shall normally have experience of examining Research Degrees. In an examination for a PhD award, at least one Examiner shall have experience of examining the award of PhD.

An External Examiner shall not normally be a supervisor of another research student of TUS.

Former members of staff or students of TUS should not be proposed as External Examiners until three years after the termination of their employment or period of study.

No person who is registered for an RDP at TUS may act as an External Examiner.

An External Examiner cannot examine more than three theses in any five-year period for TUS. In exceptional circumstances, an appeal to allow the same external examiner to examine within the exclusion period can be made to the Vice President Research Development & Innovation/Vice President Academic Affairs & Registrar.

8.1.2 Criteria for the Appointment of Internal Examiners

The research student's thesis shall be examined by at least one Internal Examiner in addition to the External Examiner(s). The Internal Examiner, nominated by the principal supervisor, shall not be the research student's principal supervisor. The Internal Examiner must be active in the general area of research.

Where the research student and principal supervisor are both members of staff of the same establishment (whether TUS or Sponsoring Establishment or Collaborating Establishment), a second External Examiner must be appointed to fulfil the duties normally assigned to the Internal Examiner. If the Staff member is seeking the award of PhD then both external examiners are normally required to hold a PhD.

No person who is registered for a RDP at TUS may act as an Internal Examiner.

In addition to examining the thesis, the Internal Examiner has an administrative role in maintaining contact as appropriate with the GSO on behalf of the other Examiner(s) with regard to assessment.

8.1.3 Independent Chair

A non-voting Independent Chairperson who is independent of the research student, supervisory panel, collaborating or sponsoring institution(s), and the Examination team will be nominated by the GSO. As part of the process of nominating possible Independent Chairs, the research student may propose a name or name(s) for Independent Chair to the GSO. All nominations will be brought to the Graduate School for recommendation, and to Academic Council for approval.

The Independent Chair appointed shall meet the requirements for principal supervisor.

A non-voting Chair is a requirement for the following processes:

- Final practice-based Masters Examination.
- Final traditional Masters where a *viva voce* is requested by the External Examiner.
- Final PhD *viva voce* Examination.

8.2 Research Postgraduate Examination Board

Where the Graduate School is satisfied that all is in order with the Application to present for Examination, a recommendation in respect of the Examiner nominations, and proposed Independent Chair (where appropriate) is submitted to the Academic Council for ratification. In special circumstances the Academic Council may act directly to appoint Examiners.

All arrangements for the final examination are made by the GSO, who liaise with the approved Examiners and Independent Chairperson (where appropriate) on one hand, and the research student and their supervisory panel on the other.

When the Examiners and Independent Chairperson (where appropriate) have been approved by the Academic Council and have accepted their roles, there should be no communication between the research student and/or their supervisory panel with any member of the Research Postgraduate Examination Board with regard to the final examination. Notwithstanding this, following the initial assessment and *viva voce* examination (where appropriate) the Internal Examiner, acting on behalf of the

Research Postgraduate Examination Board, may liaise with the principal supervisor, acting on behalf of the research student, regarding any amendments to the text which may be required.

8.3 Thesis types and specifications

The form and method of presentation of the research student's work shall be appropriate to the nature of the work. A Masters thesis will normally be submitted as a monograph. A Doctoral thesis can be submitted in either monograph or article-based format. In the case of certain disciplines, submission at Masters or doctoral level may take the form of an exhibition or a performance or computer software etc together with an Exegesis.

Submission specifications and thesis deposition requirements will be developed by the Graduate School. Parent institution guidelines shall remain until these new TUS guidelines are developed.

8.4 Examination procedures

8.4.1 Assessment Criteria for the Degree of Masters

Examiners should assess the level of knowledge, skill and competence in accordance with TUS's Criteria for Award of Degree of Masters and may recommend the award of Degree of Masters (Research) in accordance with the following criteria:

- a) The thesis/exegesis should show evidence of independent thought and research and must demonstrate a mastery of the student's chosen subject.
- b) The research student should demonstrate an understanding of methodologies appropriate to their chosen field and show adequate knowledge of literature on the subject and of the work of other scholars in the field.
- c) The research student should be capable of relating knowledge of particular topics to the broader field of study involved and of presenting such knowledge in a critical and scholarly way.
- d) Where required, the research student must present and successfully defend the body of work at a *viva voce* (either in person, hybrid or remotely).

The decision on undertaking the *viva voce* in person, hybrid or remotely, shall be made in a timely manner by the Graduate School in consultation with the examiners and the individual student on a case-by-case basis.

8.4.2 Assessment Criteria for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Examiners should assess the level of knowledge, skill and competence in accordance with TUS's Criteria for Award of Degree of Doctor of Philosophy and may recommend the award of Doctor of Philosophy in accordance with the following criteria:

- a) The research student shall have demonstrated the capacity of pursuing original independent research in their field of study, of exercising critical judgement, and making a novel contribution to knowledge in their field.
- b) The thesis/exegesis must make a substantial and original contribution to scholarship and provide evidence of originality by the exercise of independent critical powers.
- c) The thesis/exegesis must contain an acceptable amount of original work by the research student, which is considered by the Examiners to be of publishable standard in the form *inter alia* of:
 - Articles in appropriate refereed journals;
 - A book or other scholarly publication;
 - A research/creative or self-expressive monograph which meets the standard of refereed academic publications.
- d) The research student must present and successfully defend the body of work at a *viva voce* (either in person, hybrid or remotely).

The decision on undertaking the *viva voce* in person, hybrid or remotely, shall be made in a timely manner by the Graduate School in consultation with the examiners and the individual student on a case-by-case basis.

8.4.3 Examination of Performed/Exhibited Elements and of Composition

Practice-led research is research where creative practice, is undertaken as an integral part of a research process. The final thesis consists of a substantial body of creative work and a scholarly exegesis presented as an integrated whole. In the case of Art, Design, and Creative Media the candidate may wish to submit, as part of their thesis, practical components consisting of, art or design work, photographs, video, film, installations, websites, performances, or other digital/print material, alongside a reduced textual component. The creative work submitted must be original, and be as integral to the research aims, processes, and outcomes of the project as the textual component itself. The final thesis as a whole will therefore demonstrate the integration of its practical and theoretical components, so that text or exegesis and practice reflect critically on each other.

- a) The practical components must be original and not have been previously submitted to another awarding body. The thesis/exegesis must conform to the normal scholarly requirements, placing the research student's work in the relevant theoretical, historical, critical, artistic or design context and demonstrating an understanding of that context. The length of the scholarly text should normally be between 10,000 -20,000 words for Masters by Practice and 20,000- 60,000 for PhD by Practice.
- b) The practical component should fully and creatively exploit the medium in which it is made and should make a contribution to the thesis that could not have been made in words.
- c) The practical component should not be merely illustrative of the theory but must make an original contribution in its own right, which relates back, in an integral fashion, to the theoretical component of the thesis.

Creative practice, exhibitions or performances produced as part of the research should be appropriately documented.

8.4.4 Supervisor Availability

The supervisory panel will be briefed fully on the outcome of the deliberations of examiners. In certain circumstances, the supervisor may be consulted for clarification- but in a non-contributory role. At the discretion of the Independent Chair and the Examination Board, the possibility of the presence of one of the supervisory team to listen and gain insight on the examination deliberations may be facilitated.

8.5 Preparation of Examiner Summary Report

In the case of a Masters award where no *viva voce* examination takes place, both Examiners confer to try reach a consensus recommendation. Where a *viva voce* is required, each Examiner will present an independent preliminary typewritten report on the thesis/exegesis, as appropriate, to the Independent Chair prior to the *viva voce* or alternative form of examination being held. In completing the preliminary report, each Examiner shall consider whether the submission provisionally satisfies the requirements of the Degree and where possible make an appropriate provisional recommendation (subject to the outcome of the *viva voce* in the case of PhD Examination).

A final typed examiner summary report will be prepared by the Independent Chair signed by examiners. This detailed report, must provide sufficiently detailed comments on the scope and quality of the work to enable the Examination Board to satisfy itself that the criteria for the award of the RDP have been met.

Information must be provided under each heading and should be sufficiently informative to allow the Graduate School to make a recommendation to Academic Council. A report detailing the amendments to be made, if any, should also be prepared by each Examiner.

The report should comment on the following areas:

- a) The overall standard and quality of research in the thesis/exegesis;
- b) The strengths of the thesis/exegesis;
- c) The weaknesses of the thesis/exegesis;
- d) The original contribution the thesis/exegesis makes to knowledge and scholarship;
- e) Potential for publication;
- f) The writing style and overall presentation of the thesis/exegesis;
- g) The ability of the student to defend the research in the *viva voce*;
- h) Details of amendments and/or corrections required.

Award recommendation as follows:

- a) The degree of Master/PhD be awarded, no amendments needed.
- b) The degree of Master /PhD be awarded subject to the correction of any minor errors within a period of three months for reconsideration by the Internal Examiner.
- c) The degree of Master/PhD be awarded subject to the completion of any prescribed amendments within a period of six months for reconsideration by the Internal and/or External Examiner, potentially including the requirement for a *viva voce* (*with the same Examiners*).
- d) No degree be awarded, and the student continues on the Masters/PhD register.
- e) In the case of PhD, the student be awarded the degree of Masters subject to the completion of any prescribed amendments within a period of six months for reconsideration by the Internal Examiner.

f) No degree be awarded.

9 Reviews and Disputes

The review process applies to the following examination types:

- Final Masters Examination (with or without a *viva voce* element/traditional or practice-based);
- Final Doctoral Examination.

A request for a review may only be made in relation to the decision of TUS based on the recommendation of the Examiners. Alleged inadequacy of supervision, or other arrangements, during the period of study do not constitute grounds for requesting a review of the Examination decision.

Requests for a review are permitted only on the following grounds:

- a) That there are circumstances affecting the research student's performance of which the Examiners were not aware at the *viva voce*;
- b) That there is evidence of procedural irregularity in the conduct of the Examination (including administrative error) of such a nature as to cause doubt as to whether the result might have been different without such irregularity;
- c) That there is evidence of unfair or improper assessment on the part of one or more of the Examiners.

Research Students may not otherwise challenge the academic judgement of the Examiners.

9.1 Procedures for a Review

A research student must give notice that they wish to request a review within three weeks from the date of the notification of the result and must submit the case for review within a further three weeks from the date of giving notice.

The request for a review will be considered by an Appeals Review Panel (Vice President Academic Affairs and Registrar plus two other Academic Members) constituted by TUS from persons having experience of supervising and examining RDPs and who have had no previous involvement in the case. No student or research student may be a member of an Appeals Review Panel.

If an Appeals Review Panel agrees that a research student has valid grounds for a review, it must either:

a) Recommend that the Graduate School of TUS invite the Examiners to reconsider their decision;

or

b) Recommend that new Examiners be appointed.

An Appeals Review Panel is not constituted as an Examinations Board and has no authority to set aside the decision of Examiners and thereby to recommend the award of the degree.

In any instance where the Academic Council is made aware of a failure to comply with all the procedures of the Examination process, it may declare the examination null and void and request that new Examiners are appointed in the normal manner.

Where evidence of cheating or plagiarism in the preparation of the submission or other irregularities in the conduct of the Examination come to light subsequent to the recommendation of the Examiners, the Academic Council shall consider the matter, if necessary, in consultation with the Examiners, and take the necessary action in accordance with these regulations, up to and including revoking the award.

10 Conferment and post-graduation

Conferment and post-graduation will be in line with the current TUS policy.

10.1 Career development and maintenance of contact

The TUS careers guidance service will be available to students to consult re career development opportunities. In line with TUS local and regional enterprise engagement, TUS will consult with local employers on soft skill module provision. Building on already ongoing data collection processes, career tracking will continue to be developed by the Graduate School.

10.2 Revocation of degrees

The Academic Council may revoke any award made by TUS, or its parent institutions, and all privileges connected therewith if it shall be discovered at any time and proven to the satisfaction of TUS that the award is found to have been obtained by fraud or deception.

11 Related TUS Policies and Documents

- TUS Research Integrity Policy
- TUS Ethics Policy for Researchers
- TUS Intellectual Property Policy (NDAs, Template Collaboration Agreements, Deeds of Adherence and Invention Disclosure etc.)
- TUS Research Publication Policy
- TUS Policy on Collaborative Provision
- TUS Student Complaints and Problem Resolution Procedure
- TUS Academic Regulations for Taught Programmes
- TUS Student Code of Conduct and Discipline
- TUS Student Handbook.