

PROGRAMME REGULATIONS

Professional Doctorate Regulations

1. Regulations for Professional Doctorate Qualifications

1.1 Summary

- 1.1.1 These regulations apply to all Professional Doctorate degrees at Unitec.
- 1.1.2 The [Academic Statute](#) of Unitec should be read in conjunction with these regulations.
- 1.1.3 In these regulations the term 'Programme Schedule' means the schedule to these Professional Doctorate regulations for each degree award containing the special and supplementary regulations relating to that degree.

2. Definition of Terms

In these regulations, unless the context otherwise requires, the following definitions shall apply:

- a. 'Candidate' means a person whose application has been approved by the relevant Programme Committee and is enrolled in the appropriate course. Such a person is granted candidature.
- b. 'Convenor' means a person appointed by the Postgraduate Research and Scholarships Committee to convene the oral examination of a doctoral candidate. The convenor will be a senior academic (Dean, Professor or Associate Professor) from a faculty other than that in which the candidate is completing studies, and will have no relationship with the candidate.
- c. 'External Examiner' means a person external to Unitec appointed to assess student work.
- d. 'Full-time' refers to someone who is not in paid employment for 45 weeks or more of any year while engaged on study and research for the degree. With the approval of the Principal Supervisor a full-time candidate may engage in paid employment for up to 400 hours during any calendar year.
- e. 'Part-time' refers to someone who, because of employment, health or family or other reasons, is unable to devote his or her full time to study and research.
- f. 'Supervisor' means an academic who fulfils the role of adviser, mentor and motivator, thereby guiding the academic progress of the candidate to reach his or her research

potential. Programmes may use alternative terminology to refer to this role, including but not limited to Adviser, Consultant, and / or Facilitator.

- g. 'Thesis' means a record of sustained independent research in which the candidate's own work forms, as a point of origin or reference, a significant part of the intellectual enquiry of an appropriate topic. It is 240 credits at Level 10. A thesis may also be referred to as a Project Report.

3. Admission to a Professional Doctorate

3.1 Admission

- 3.1.1 To be admitted to a professional doctorate programme applicants must meet Unitec's English language entry requirements (see 3.3.1).

AND

- 3.1.2 Meet the General Admission requirements (see 3.2.1).
- 3.1.3 To be admitted to a specific professional doctorate programme, the applicant must also meet any programme-specific admission requirements as set out in the respective programme schedule.

AND

- 3.1.4 The applicant may be subject to further selection criteria (see Section 4).

3.2 General Admission

- 3.2.1 Applicants must have at least three years appropriate professional experience relevant to the discipline in which the doctorate is to be undertaken, and have:
 - a. Qualified for, or been awarded, a master's degree in the same or similar discipline with not less than upper second class honours, or equivalent; or
 - b. Been awarded an honours degree of four years duration in the same or similar discipline with at least an A- average, and which includes a research project; or
 - c. a postgraduate diploma in the same or similar discipline and be able to demonstrate, through substantial industry reports or other research publications, analytical and critical thinking skills and data interpretation.
 - d. Other qualifications recognised as equivalent at the discretion of the relevant Programme Committee.

3.3 English Language Admission Requirements

3.3.1 General English Language Requirements

Applicants must have achieved a minimum standard of English as demonstrated by minimum of 8 credits at NCEA Level 2 in English (4 in Reading, 4 in Writing).

3.3.2 English language entry requirements for international students for whom English is not their first language:

Applicants must have at least ONE of the following:

- a) Gained NCEA level 3 and met New Zealand university entrance requirements;

- b) Clear evidence that they satisfy one of the following criteria for existing English proficiency:
1. Previous primary and secondary study in English as evidenced by completion of one of the following at schools with English as the language of instruction in countries with a student visa approval rate of at least 80 per cent:
 - i. Completion of all primary education and at least three years of secondary education (that is, the equivalent of New Zealand Forms 3 to 7 or years 9 to 13), or
 - ii. Completion of at least five years of secondary education (that is, the equivalent of New Zealand Forms 3 to 7 or years 9 to 13)
 2. Previous tertiary study in English: clear evidence of completion of a tertiary qualification of at least three years' duration with English as the language of instruction in New Zealand, Australia, Canada, the Republic of Ireland, South Africa, the United Kingdom or the United States.
 3. Achievement of the Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults (CELTA)
- a) Achieved, **within the preceding two years**, at least one of the English proficiency outcomes listed below:
1. NZ Certificate in English Language (NZCEL) (Academic) (Level 5)
 2. An overall IELTS band score (Academic Format) of 6.5 with no band score lower than 6. The IELTS scores used must be taken from a single IELTS Test Report Form.
 3. An overall TOEFL Paper-based test (pBT) score of 590 (essay 5.5 TWE) OR an overall TOEFL Internet-based test (iBT) Score of 79 (writing 21)
 4. University of Cambridge English Examinations: CAE or CPE with a score of 176. No less than 169 in each skill
 5. Pearson Test of English PToE (Academic) with a score of 58

4. Selection

Any selection criteria will be specified in the programme schedule.

5. Requirements for the Award of the Qualification

- a. To be awarded a Professional Doctorate degree a student must have successfully completed a total of 360 credits from the courses specified in the programme schedule for the degree, including 120 credits from pre-thesis courses and a 240 credit thesis at Level 10.
- b. The award shall be made without classification.

6. Approval of Courses of Study

- 6.1 A candidate shall obtain approval from the relevant Programme Committee for the selection of courses to be undertaken in any 12-month period.

7. Periods of Enrolment

7.1 Enrolment and Admission

- 7.1.1 Unless otherwise stated in the programme schedule, a student whose application to enrol in a professional doctorate is approved shall pursue their coursework and research full-time for at least three calendar years if they are enrolled on a full-time basis or the part-time equivalent.
- 7.1.2 Admission is approved by the Professional Doctorate Committee:
- a. For 36 months in the first instance if enrolled on a full-time basis, or
 - b. For 72 months in the first instance if enrolled on a part-time basis.
- 7.1.3 Where a candidate may be prevented by ill health, or other exceptional circumstances, from completing the degree requirements within the period of enrolment set out in 7.1.1 and 7.1.2, the Postgraduate Research and Scholarships Committee may approve a suspension of enrolment for up to a maximum of 12 months.
- 7.1.4 Except as allowed for in 7.1.3, a student must maintain his or her enrolment in each semester until the completion of study.
- 7.1.5 A student who fails to enrol within 6 calendar weeks of the commencement of each semester will be deemed to have terminated his or her studies unless the Professional Doctorate Committee determines otherwise.
- 7.1.6 The maximum period of registration for a professional doctorate will normally be 72 months from the date of commencement of study. In exceptional circumstances the Postgraduate Research and Scholarships Committee may agree to an extension to the registration period for a specified period of no more than 12 months.

8. Granting Candidature

Except with the permission of the relevant Programme Committee, to gain candidature a student shall meet the requirements specified in the Programme Schedule.

9. Satisfactory Progress, Suspensions

9.1 Progress

- 9.1.1 Written progress reports to the Postgraduate Research and Scholarships Committee shall be submitted at six monthly intervals from the beginning of candidature.

- 9.1.2 Where the candidate has undertaken part of his/her study external to Unitec, the candidate shall be required to provide the Principal Supervisor with a report of the work completed, within two months of returning to Unitec.
- 9.1.3 At least annually during the period of candidature, the candidate shall give an interim presentation of findings to peer groups and other researchers under the guidance of the Postgraduate Research and Scholarships Committee. Formative feedback shall be provided to the candidate.
- 9.1.4 Following review of the progress reports, Postgraduate Research and Scholarships Committee may continue the candidature, vary the conditions of candidature, or consider the termination of the candidature. Prior to deciding termination, the Committee may seek clarification or advice in consultation with the candidate and the supervisors.

9.2 Suspension and termination

- 9.2.1 Enrolment for a professional doctorate will normally be continuous. The Postgraduate Research and Scholarships Committee may, on the receipt of an application from a candidate, and with the endorsement of their Programme Committee, approve a suspension of enrolment for up to a maximum of 12 months. In such cases the period of suspension will not count towards the registration period of the degree.
- 9.2.2 The candidature may be terminated if the Postgraduate Research and Scholarships Committee considers the supervisor's report indicates that a candidate's progress is unsatisfactory, but not before the candidate is invited to show cause, by a date communicated in writing, why candidature should not be terminated.
- 9.2.3 A candidate whose candidature has been terminated under 9.2.2 may apply to be re-enrolled as a candidate, and the Postgraduate Research and Scholarships Committee may approve such re-enrolment on such conditions as it considers appropriate.

10. Enrolment in Thesis

10.1 Residency

- 10.1.1 Candidates for the thesis are normally expected to complete the advanced study and research for the thesis at Unitec.
- 10.1.2 Where a candidate intends to be absent from Unitec in pursuit of his or her research, the Programme Leader will submit suitable plans for the supervision of the candidate during his or her absence to the Postgraduate Research and Scholarships Committee for its approval. Supervisors should be appointed no later than 6 weeks from the commencement of the thesis.

10.2 Supervision of student work

- 10.2.1 Prior to commencement of the thesis, the Postgraduate Research and Scholarships Committee shall appoint supervisors on the recommendation of the relevant Programme Committee.
- 10.2.2 A candidate undertaking a thesis shall have a minimum of two supervisors, as follows:

- a. At least one supervisor shall have experience of supervising candidates to the successful completion of a doctoral degree;
 - b. One supervisor shall be the principal supervisor with responsibility to supervise the candidate on a regular and frequent basis;
 - c. The principal supervisor shall be registered on the Unitec Register of Supervisors.
- 10.3 If a supervisor is absent for an extended period an appropriately qualified replacement supervisor shall be appointed following approval by the Postgraduate Research and Scholarships Committee, following a recommendation from the Programme Committee.
- 10.4 In the case of candidates whose work is not proceeding satisfactorily due to an ineffective working relationship with their supervisor(s), the Postgraduate Research and Scholarships Committee may arrange for a suitably qualified replacement supervisor to be appointed, on recommendation from the Programme Committee.

11. Assessment of Prior Learning

Assessment of Prior Learning does not apply to professional doctorate qualifications.

12. Credit Recognition

No cross credits will be granted towards the degree of a Professional Doctorate and no previously assessed work shall be credited towards the thesis.

13. Assessment and Granting of Credits

13.1 Coursework

The due dates for all summative assessment work shall be notified in course information. No late work will be accepted for marking unless specified in the Programme Schedule for the degree.

13.2 Course grades

Course grades are calculated by the mathematical aggregation of weighted summative assessment grades on the basis set out in the Programme Schedule for the degree.

13.3 Submission of thesis

- 13.3.1 Theses will not be accepted for examination unless the student is enrolled on the relevant course at the time the work is submitted and unless a signed Declaration form is provided at the time of submission.
- 13.3.2 The thesis shall represent the work of the student and may consist of either published or unpublished work, or a combination of both. The candidate shall indicate in the thesis, or as an appendix, any part that s/he has published or presented prior to submission of the thesis, together with reference to the source of publication or presentation. This shall be

accompanied by a statement signed by the candidate identifying the candidate's own contribution, where work is done jointly.

- 13.3.3 The candidate shall, with the approval of the principal supervisor, submit four copies of the thesis embodying the results of the research. This shall be accompanied by statements from both the principal supervisor, certifying that the work described in the thesis was carried out under his or her immediate supervision, and the candidate, certifying that the thesis is his or her independent work.
- 13.3.4 Where a candidate undertakes a thesis for which the principal outcome is the preparation of a scholarly edition of text or texts, or original artefacts, the completed submission shall include:
- a. a copy of the edited text(s) or collection of artefacts, and appropriate textual and explanatory annotations; and
 - b. a substantial critical commentary which sets the text(s) or collection of artefacts in the relevant historical, theoretical or critical context.

14. Thesis Examination Regulations

14.1 Examination Process

- 14.1.1 On receipt of the thesis the Postgraduate Research and Scholarships Committee shall appoint a senior Unitec academic staff member as the Convenor of the thesis examination process.
- 14.1.2 The Postgraduate Research and Scholarships Committee shall appoint all examiners, on the basis of recommendations made by the relevant Programme Committee.
- 14.1.3 A thesis shall be assessed by a minimum of three examiners of international standing in the relevant field or discipline, a majority of whom will be external to Unitec, and at least one of whom will be from a university or similar institution outside New Zealand.
- 14.1.4 Except in exceptional circumstances a supervisor shall not be an examiner. If the supervisor is an examiner a fourth examiner will be appointed.
- 14.1.5 An external examiner for a thesis shall be appointed on the basis of postgraduate qualifications, experience in research or independent scholarship and practice in the general area of the candidate's study and, where practicable, have experience as a specialist in the area to be examined.
- 14.1.6 At least one examiner for a thesis shall have substantial experience of examining postgraduate degree candidates.
- 14.1.7 Each examiner for a thesis shall read and examine the submitted work, and present an independent and confidential report to the Postgraduate Research and Scholarships Committee. In completing the report, each examiner shall consider whether the work satisfies the requirements of the degree and shall make an appropriate recommendation in accordance with guidelines to examiners.
- 14.1.8 In circumstances where the research undertaken for a thesis has commercial sensitivity, the candidate and the principal supervisor may, on application, be permitted by the Postgraduate Research and Scholarships Committee to treat all or part of the thesis as a confidential document for such a period as deemed appropriate. In such cases, access

to the confidential material shall be restricted to the supervisors, candidates and examiners, and the intellectual property policy of Unitec shall be followed.

- 14.1.9 In cases where more than two examiners have been appointed the Postgraduate Research and Scholarships Committee may accept a majority recommendation, provided that the majority recommendation includes at least one examiner who is external to Unitec.

14.2 Assessment of thesis

- 14.2.1 Unless otherwise stated in the programme schedule, an oral examination on the thesis will be held only if deemed necessary by the examination Convenor and at their discretion. The oral examination shall be arranged by the Convenor and shall be conducted by a minimum of two of the thesis examiners, at least one of whom is external to Unitec and who has the responsibility of posing the questions from the overseas examiner..

- 14.2.2 The examiners may recommend that the thesis be:

- a. accepted and the degree awarded;
- b. accepted and the degree awarded after minor amendments have been made to the satisfaction of the convenor of the examination;
- c. rejected in its current form but be revised and resubmitted;
- d. rejected with no right of resubmission.

- 14.2.3 In the event of serious disagreement in the recommendations among the examiners, which is not resolved by an oral examination, the Postgraduate Research and Scholarships Committee may:

- a. appoint one or two further examiners to report on the area of contention; or
- b. invite Academic Board to arrive at a decision after consulting an independent referee external to Unitec.

- 14.2.4 The Postgraduate Research and Scholarships Committee shall decide one of the following:

- a. accepted and the degree awarded; or
- b. accepted and the degree awarded after minor amendments have been made to the satisfaction of the convenor of the examination; or
- c. rejected in its current form but may be revised and resubmitted; or
- d. rejected with no right of resubmission.

14.3 Resubmissions/Revisions

- 14.3.1 When a candidate is required to revise the thesis for resubmission, the following provisions shall apply:

- a. The Postgraduate Research and Scholarships Committee shall determine the date by which the thesis is to be resubmitted.
- b. Upon resubmission the revised thesis shall be examined as a whole by the examiners appointed for the initial assessment. If one of the original examiners is not available, the Postgraduate Research and Scholarships Committee may appoint an alternative examiner.

- c. In their reports on the revised thesis, the examiners are to recommend whether or not another oral examination is to be held.

14.3.2 Except in exceptional circumstances, a candidate may not:

- a. resubmit a thesis more than once; or
- b. resubmit a thesis which has been failed.

14.4 Thesis, Dissertation and Research Project Examination

14.4.1 Postgraduate Research and Scholarships Committee shall appoint examiners on the basis of recommendations made by the relevant programme academic authority. The implementation of a recognised procedure for checking the authenticity of the research report is mandatory, prior to research projects being submitted to examiners.

14.4.2 Each examiner for a thesis, dissertation or research project shall read and examine the submitted work, and present an independent report to Postgraduate Research and Scholarships Committee. In completing the report, each examiner shall consider whether the work satisfies the requirements of the degree and shall make an appropriate recommendation in accordance with guidelines to examiners. In the event of any reference to plagiarism in an examiner's report, the Postgraduate Office may review the circumstances around such a claim before the report is referred to the Postgraduate Research and Scholarships Committee for approval of the final grade. If there is cause for concern about the claim, the Dean of Research and Enterprise will enter into a dialogue with the examiner in order to facilitate clarification.

15. Progress through Qualification

15.1 Exclusion from a qualification

Any candidate who, over the last two preceding years of his or her course work, has failed to pass courses equivalent to one half of the credits in which s/he has been enrolled over that period, shall be deemed to be excluded from the programme and shall not be permitted to re-enrol without the prior permission of the relevant Programme Committee.

15.2 Exclusion from a course

A candidate who has enrolled in a course that comprises part of a postgraduate programme, and has failed that course, shall not be permitted to re-enrol for that course except with the permission of the relevant Programme Committee.

15.3 Application to have exclusion waived

15.3.1 Any excluded candidate who wishes to apply for permission to re-enrol shall lodge a written application with the Programme Leader at least one month before official enrolment date in the semester for which s/he seeks admission, together with the fee specified.

15.3.2 The decision on whether any particular candidate who has been excluded under clause 15.1 or 15.2 may be permitted to re-enrol shall be made by the relevant Programme Committee.

- 15.3.3 When applying for re-enrolment, the candidate will need to satisfy the relevant Programme Committee that as a result of study or other activity in the intervening period, there is a reasonable chance of success in subsequent study.
- 15.3.4 In approving any such application, the relevant Programme Committee may lay down such conditions for re-enrolment as it deems appropriate.

16. Appeals Against Decisions for Thesis

16.1 Process

- 16.1.1 Candidates may make an application to appeal to the Academic Board Appeals Committee against a decision of the Postgraduate Research and Scholarships Committee.
- 16.1.2 Applications for appeal must be received by the Chair of Academic Board within 15 working days of the mailing of the Postgraduate Research and Scholarships Committee's decision. In exceptional circumstances the Chair of Academic Board may extend the time for receipt of the application for appeal.
- 16.1.3 The only allowable grounds for appeal are that:
- a. additional information has become available which was not available and could not reasonably have been made available at the time the original decision was made; or
 - b. there was a material irregularity in the conduct of summative assessment on the course or in the procedures of the Programme Committee or the Postgraduate Research and Scholarships Committee.
- 16.1.4 If in the opinion of the Chair of Academic Board the grounds for appeal have not been satisfied the Chair of Academic Board shall notify the student within 10 working days that the appeal will not be heard, otherwise the Chair of the Academic Board shall arrange for the Appeals Committee to be convened.

17. Commencement

These regulations came into force Semester 1, 2016.