

Degrees of Doctor of Letters and Doctor of Science Procedures

Section 1 - Admission

(1) On receipt of an application, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research shall request the Academic Board to constitute a Higher Doctorate Committee and shall appoint two or more internal assessors to determine whether the candidate is acceptable for admission. The choice of internal assessors shall be appropriate to the status of higher doctorates as among the most prestigious of university degrees. The internal assessors shall normally be chosen from academic staff at not less than Level D and, if possible, from among holders of higher doctorates.

(2) Upon receipt of the internal assessors' reports the Higher Doctorate Committee shall decide whether or not to admit the applicant to candidature. In exceptional circumstances, admission may be recommended for an applicant who does not meet the requirements set out in clause 3 of the policy but such a recommendation will require a very strong supporting case.

(3) Upon admission to candidature, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research shall notify the Chair of the Higher Doctorate Committee of the admission and forward all details of the admission (including if relevant, the supporting case for admission under exceptional circumstances) to Research Services.

- a. This notification will also clearly indicate which higher doctorate admission has been agreed upon.
- b. From the time of this notification until the conclusion of the examination process, the Directorate of Research Services shall administer all aspects of the candidature.
- c. Research Services shall advise the candidate of his or her successful admission, once the notification from the Higher Doctorate Committee has been received.

Section 2 - Finalising the Submission

(4) Upon receipt of the draft version or plan of the candidate's Submission, the Higher Doctorate Committee will consult relevant sources of expertise, as needed, to ensure the Submission will be in a form suitable for examination

(5) The Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research shall indicate to the candidate whether or not their Submission will be suitable for examination.

(6) If the proposed form is not suitable, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research will advise the candidate with respect to changes needed to make the form suitable.

(7) If the form of the Submission is deemed subject to negotiation with the candidate because of its proposed non-standard nature, the negotiation will be managed by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research and will result in a written record of what has been agreed.

(8) The Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research shall formally advise both the candidate and the Directorate of Research Services to confirm that the Submission will be in a suitable form and what that form will be.

(9) Research Services will receive and record copies of all correspondence between the candidate and the University

Section 3 - The Examination

(10) Upon arrival of the Submission, Research Services shall inform the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research of its receipt.

(11) The Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research in conjunction with the Higher Doctorate Committee shall, after suitable consultation with relevant UNE academic staff and with the candidate:

- a. assemble a pool of potential examiners; and
- b. inform Research Services of suitability of four examiners for the Submission selected from the pool and their contact details; and
- c. advise which of the four examiners shall be held as a reserve should conditions change with respect to one of the three active examiners of whom at least two must be external to the University.

(12) Each examiner shall be asked to submit a separate written report on the merits of the Submission and will be reminded to provide his or her report within two months of receipt of the Submission.

(13) If an examiner fails to provide their report (after appropriate reminders) within a maximum of three months, the Higher Doctorate Committee, after consultation with the relevant Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research, may notify the examiner that his or her services are no longer required and the reserve examiner may then be activated as a replacement.

(14) Research Services shall coordinate the examination process and shall receive the reports from all examiners to place before the Higher Doctorate Committee.

(15) The Higher Doctorate Committee must look for unanimity in the examiners' recommendations before reaching its recommendation either to award or not award admission to the higher doctorate degree. If it cannot be achieved the degree will not be awarded.

(16) If the candidate appeals the decision of the Higher Doctorate Committee in accordance with clause 21 of the [Degrees of Doctor of Letters and Doctor of Science Rule](#), the Chair of Academic Board shall immediately refer the appeal and all associated materials to the Academic Board Standing Committee for its review and final decision.

- a. The Academic Board Standing Committee shall be empowered to gather any information it deems relevant to making a judgment regarding the validity of the appeal.
- b. Matters of an academic nature will not be considered by the Academic Board Standing Committee; it will rule only on the procedural appropriateness of the examination process.
- c. Any member of the Academic Board Standing Committee involved in the examination of the Submission or in making the Higher Doctorate Committee's determination that has been appealed will absent themselves from all discussions of the appeal.

(17) Examiners' reports and recommendations are to be made available to candidates without a Freedom of Information application but, unless the examiner consents, the papers are not to be released in a form by which the examiner is identifiable.

Status and Details

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