

**POLICY
ON
POSTGRADUATE TRAINING**

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POSTGRADUATE TRAINING POLICY

PREAMBLE

The University of Venda is a higher education institution that has a responsibility to provide an academic environment at which research training will take. These guidelines are aimed at fostering and promotion of quality postgraduate studies at the University of Venda.

The guidelines are to be read in line with:

1. **Regulatory framework**

- Statute of the University of Venda,
- Research and Innovation Policy, November 2010,
- General rules and Calendar (UNIVEN).

Links with other policies

2. **Purpose**

To regulate the administration and awarding of all postgraduate degrees with a research component.

3. **Scope of Policy**

The policy is applicable to all students who register for an Honours, Masters or Doctoral degree with a research component.

4. **Responsibility**

The implementation of the policy will be monitored by the Postgraduate Coordinator (Research and Innovation). The responsibility lies with the DVC, Academic who accounts to SENATE.

5. **Policy Review**

The policy will be reviewed every five years.

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CHAPTER ONE: POSTGRADUATE REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

1. Higher Degrees Committees

1.1 Senate Higher Degrees Committee

The committee is a standing committee of Senate and shall report to Senex and/or Senate.

(i) Purpose

To coordinate, monitor and promote the quality of postgraduate studies, and to ensure consistency in the application of postgraduate rules across the Schools.

(ii) Composition

1. Vice-Chancellor (ex-officio)
2. Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic (ex-officio)
3. Dean or School representative at a Professor level
4. Director: Research and Innovation
5. Coordinator: Postgraduate studies (Secretariat)
6. Manager: Quality Assurance
7. A maximum of two co-opted members
8. Registrar (ex-officio)
9. Deputy Registrar

(iii) Terms of Reference

1. Approves research proposals for Mini-dissertations, Dissertations and Thesis (Master and Doctoral).
2. Appoints supervisors/promoters and examiners for dissertations and thesis and report these decisions to Senex and/or Senate.

3. Considers the Assessment reports for dissertations and recommendations to Senex or Senate.
4. The committee makes recommendations to other appropriate committees and Senate in order to benefit postgraduate studies at UNIVEN.
5. The committee is responsible for review and development of postgraduate guidelines and policies at University level.
6. The committee must have delegated authority to decide the result of examinations, to approve applications for readmission after exclusion, application through Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), all of which would be upon the recommendation of the School's Higher Degrees Committee.
7. The committee shall elect a Chair and Deputy Chair among its members, who will serve for a period of three academic years, starting 01 July. The Chair shall be a Professor with an extensive research supervision record.
8. The committee will meet once a month.
9. The committee secretariat will be the Postgraduate Coordinator Unit the Research and Innovations Directorate.

1.2 School Higher Degrees Committee

(i) Purpose

This is a standing committee in all Schools. The purpose is to regulate the administration and implementation of all postgraduate degrees, and to monitor the progress of the student. The committee shall ensure quality assurance and processes for obtaining ethics approval for research.

(ii) Composition

Dean (ex-officio)

Vice-Dean (ex-officio)

HOD's of all department

- 1 representative from each department (Senior Academic)
- 1 postgraduate student representative
- University Postgraduate coordinator (ex-officio)

Secretariat: School Administrator / School Officer.

The committee shall elect a chair amongst themselves, at the beginning of each academic year.

(iii) Terms of Reference

1. To consider and approve 4th level and honours research topics and supervisors as recommended by the Departmental Board. The proposal at this level shall be approved by the Departmental Board.
2. To consider masters dissertation and doctoral thesis proposals and recommend to the University Higher Degrees Committee.
3. To consider the appropriateness and recommend supervisors, promoters for Masters and Doctoral and examiners to UHDC for approval.
4. To consider the quarterly progress reports of postgraduate students on the recommendations of the supervisors/promoters and/or department.
5. To consider the examination reports of mini-dissertations, dissertations and thesis and recommend to UHDC.
6. To quality assurance research proposals and ensure processes for ethical clearance.
7. The committee is responsible for ensuring that each postgraduate programme / or department has student manual and code of practice.
8. The committee is responsible for ensuring that all supervisors/promoters are trained and monitored.

CHAPTER TWO: SUPERVISION

2.1 Purpose

The University has a responsibility to ensure that candidates for higher degrees work in an appropriate intellectual and academic environment and receive appropriate supervision.

The University strives to ensure consistent excellence in supervision across all Schools. The policy draws together previous guidelines and requirements of supervision in one clear policy.

2.2 Supervision Arrangements

The term supervisor is used for masters and promoter is used for doctoral.

1. A Supervisor/Promoter appropriate to the field of study which the research is to be undertaken shall be approved by Senate, or HDC or SHDC.
2. A Supervisor for a Masters candidate shall hold at least a Masters degree. The main supervisor shall hold a doctoral degree.
3. A masters candidate shall have at least 2 supervisors. A maximum of three is permissible, where expertise is required.
4. One of supervisor shall belong to the discipline or department offering the Masters programme.
5. A supervisor may be appointed from another higher education institution or research institute.
6. A promoter for a doctoral degree shall hold a doctoral degree.
7. Each doctoral candidate shall be allocated two promoters (1 main promoter and a co-promote). A maximum of four is permissible where expertise is required.
8. A promoter may be appointed from another higher education or research institution.

9. External supervisors/promoters shall be required to abide by the rules and regulations and codes of practice of the University.
10. Supervisors/promoters must demonstrate active involvement in research and publication in their disciplines.
11. Supervisors/promoters must participate in postgraduate research training activities of the University.

2.3 Eligibility to Supervise/Promote

1. To be the main supervisor, one shall have supervised/promoted at least one masters/doctoral to succession under mentorship.
2. Co-supervision/co-promotion may be done by staff with appropriate qualifications.
3. All new supervisors shall attend the Postgraduate Supervision Development programme offered by Directorate Research and Innovation / CHETL.
4. All main supervisor/promoters shall be expected to mentor other emerging supervisors/promoters.

2.4 Supervisor Load

2.4.1 Honours/4th Level Research Project

Experiences	:	15 as main supervisor
		20 as co-supervisor
Emerging	:	7 as Co-supervisor

2.4.2 Mini-dissertation (maximum numbers only)

Experienced	:	10 as main supervisor
		15 as co-supervisor
Emerging	:	5 as co-supervisor

2.4.3 Dissertation (maximum numbers only)

Experienced	:	8 as main supervisor
		10 as co-supervisor
Emerging	:	3 as co-supervisor

2.4.4 Thesis (maximum numbers only)

Experienced : 5 as main promoter
3 as co-promoter
Emerging : 1 as co-promoter

2.4.5 Training and scholarship.

The University expects all academic staff with supervisory responsibilities to undertake regular training in postgraduate supervision.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH PROCESS

3.1 Research Proposal Development

1. The research proposal shall be developed in accordance with the guidelines of the programme/department/school/university.
2. The research proposal shall be approved within the 1st semester of the candidature for a Honours and research masters. In the case of the mini-dissertation, the proposal shall be approved by the end of the 2nd semester, for a doctoral candidate, the proposal shall have been approved by the end of the 2nd semester.
3. The student who intends to graduate in May shall have submitted the final dissertation/thesis for examination by November of the proceeding year.

3.2 Assessment and Publication

1. The Honours and 4th level project are subject to rules applicable for final year modules.
2. The mini-dissertation shall be examined by the supervisor/s and one external examiner.
3. The dissertation shall be examined by the supervisor/s and two external examiners.
4. The thesis shall be examined by the promoters and two external examiner. For international comparability, it is recommended where applicable, to have an international examiner, particularly from international Universities who are already our partners.

5. The main supervisor/promoter is responsible for writing a final report from all examination reports and submits to SHDC and UHDC using appropriate format.
6. The student is expected to submit a manuscript for publication before graduating.

CHAPTER FOUR: POSTGRADUATE FUNDING

The following funding opportunities exist.

- 4.1 Work-study programme for honours, masters and doctoral full time students. This covers tuition fees.
- 4.2 Research project funding as per Research and Innovation Policy (2010) Chapter 15. This covers research running costs.
- 4.3 Students and/or their supervisors may apply for funding from organizations such as NRF, MRC, BANKSETA, other SETAS, and GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND PRIVATE CORPORATES.

CHAPTER FIVE: INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

- a. All Postgraduate programmes shall be resident in academic departments.
- b. The implementation of postgraduate programmes shall be coordinated by the Head of Department and oversight by the Dean.
- c. The University postgraduate coordinator will be responsible for ensuring compliance to this policy and oversight will be provided by the DVC, Academic.

CHAPTER SIX: ANNEXURES

The following guidelines procedures must be development or already exist.

6.1 University Level

- A. POSTGRADUATE GENERAL RULES - Calendar (exist)
- B. UNIVERSITY POSTGRADUATE MANUAL - for students.

- C. UNIVERSITY SUPERVISOR MANUAL - Guidelines for Postgraduate supervision
(to be reviewed)
- D. SUPERVISOR / PROMOTER INCENTIVE GUIDELINES.
- E. ORAL DEFENCE GUIDELINES.
- F. CODE OF ETHICS AT SCHOOL LEVEL.
- G. QUALITY ASSURANCE OF POSTGRADUATE GUIDELINES.
- H. GUIDELINES FOR POSTGRADUATE PUBLISHING AND CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE.

6.2 School level

- I. SCHOOL HIGHER DEGREES COMMITTEE (HDC) PROCEDURE MANUAL.
Guide for Research project development and writing (include referencing styles).
- J. SUPERVISOR TRAINING PROGRAMME.
- K. MONITORING AND EVALUATION GUIDELINES.

6.3 Departmental / Programme level

- A. PROGRAMME / SCHOOL / DEPARTMENT
- B. Plan of Action Template (Student/Supervisor)

6.4 Library

- Postgraduate Resources
- EDT implementation guidelines.

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