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Academic Policy and Procedures Manual

12 Conduct of Student Research
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Policy Owner:	Postgraduate Research and Scholarships Committee
Policy Manager:	Dean, Research
Approval body:	Academic Board

1.0 Policy

Students will be supported, through robust academic processes and a collegial academic environment, to achieve high standards in their research.

To this end:
- Staff will be active in guiding research proposal development and the research proposal approval process will be rigorous and supportive;
- Students will have access through supervision to the methodological expertise, discipline-specific expertise, and the practical wisdom necessary to assist them to complete their research;
- Completed research will be presented in keeping with Unitec's and the academic discipline's academic standards;
- The research examination process will be independent and robust;
- Students will be encouraged to publish their work, and will be supported in publishing quality assured research outputs.

2.0 Explanation

For the purposes of this policy postgraduate student research means research projects, dissertations, and theses at level 9 or 10 of 45 credits or more. Undergraduate student research means significant research projects of greater than or equal to 15 credits at level 7 or 8. The policy and its guidelines have a mixed audience including students, staff, and academic staff external to Unitec.

This document sets out policy for the conduct of student research and responsibilities for each of the following stages of the postgraduate student research 'lifecycle':
- Part A: Supervising student research;
- Part B: Research proposal development and approval;
- Part C: Presenting postgraduate student research;
- Part D: Examining postgraduate student research, and;
- Part E: Publishing student research.

Guidelines for implementing elements of this policy are listed at the end of this document.

3.0   Implementation

This policy will be implemented in a way that honours the Unitec values:
- Integrity, honesty and accountability
- Creativity, innovation and courage
- Relevance and responsiveness
- Care, tolerance and respect
- Fairness and justice

3.1   Responsibilities

The **Postgraduate Research and Scholarships Committee** are responsible for overseeing this policy and associated procedures and guidelines, including devolving responsibility to accredited committees, and for approving amendments (or delegating such approval) to those procedures and guidelines. While changes to the policy require approval of Academic Board, changes to the associated procedures and guidelines are the responsibility of the Postgraduate Research and Scholarships Committee.

The **Dean, Research** may allow variations to the procedures and guidelines set out in this document if those variations will lead to the same outcomes as those intended by this policy.

Committees with devolved responsibilities under this policy are responsible for adhering to the limits of their accreditation.

Part A: Supervising Student Research

A.1   Supervisor Appointment

Supervisors are appointed to a student conducting postgraduate research according to the needs of the student, the requirements of the research, and supervisors' expertise, experience, and other commitments (Guideline 12/4).

Postgraduate research supervisors are appointed from the Unitec register of supervisors. Criteria for inclusion on the register are set out in guidelines to this policy.

The Postgraduate Research and Scholarships Committee approve inclusion on the supervisor register and processes for supervisor appointment. This includes delegating responsibility for supervisor appointment to departmental committees or committees representing a cluster of programmes.

A.2   Code for Supervision of Postgraduate Students Undertaking Research

The Code for Supervision of Postgraduate Students Undertaking Research ('Code') (Guideline 12/2) governs the relationship between students and supervisors.

A.3   Code for Supervision of Undergraduate Students Undertaking Research

The Code for Supervision of Undergraduate Students Undertaking Research (Guideline 12/3) governs the relationship between students and supervisors.

Part B: Research Proposal Development and Approval

B.1 Proposal Development

Student research proposals are developed with academic staff and supervisor guidance.

The Postgraduate Centre makes available institutional guidelines on research proposal development (Guideline 12/6); however programmes may apply programme specific requirements.

B.2 Research Proposal Approval

The Postgraduate Research and Scholarships Committee oversee research proposal approval. This includes delegating responsibility for level 9 research proposal approval to departmental committees or committees representing a cluster of departments (Guidelines 12/1 and 12/5). The committee retains responsibility for level 10 research proposal approval.

Part C: Presenting Postgraduate Student Research

C.1 Guidelines for Presentation

The Research Office and Postgraduate Centre make available general guidelines for the presentation of theses, dissertations, and research projects (Guideline 12/8). Departments may have additional programme-specific requirements and, if so, will make them available to students.

Guidelines will include information on the extent of third-party editorial assistance that students may seek (Guideline 12/9).

Part D: Examining Postgraduate Student Research

D.1 Administration and Responsibilities

The Research Office and Postgraduate Centre administer the examination process on behalf of the Postgraduate Research and Scholarships Committee. This includes liaising with examiners and providing examiners with relevant information and guidance.

The Postgraduate Research and Scholarships Committee appoint examiners on the recommendation of the Programme Committee and award a grade based on the examiners' recommendations.

D.2 Procedures

Mandatory procedures for the conduct of the examination process are provided in the Generic Regulations and in programme-specific regulations for the respective degrees.

Part E: Publishing Student Research

Part E.1 Responsibilities

The Research Office and Postgraduate Student Centre provide guidance on and support for the process of the publication of student research.

4.0   Other Documentation

Additional documents supporting this are identified below and are available on the **myUnitecStaff portal.**

Generally relevant documents:
12/1 Devolved Supervisor and Student Research Proposal Approval

Documents relevant to Part A:
12/2 Code for Supervision of Postgraduate Students Undertaking Research
12/3 Code for Supervision of Undergraduate Students Undertaking Research
12/4 Guidelines and Criteria for Supervisor Appointment

Documents relevant to Part B:
12/5 Outline of Research Proposal Approval Process
12/6 Guidelines for Research Proposals
12/7 Research Proposal Submission Form

Documents relevant to Part C:
12/8 Guidelines for Presentation of Postgraduate Student Research
12/9 Guidelines for Editing and Proof-reading Postgraduate Student Research

Documents relevant to Part D:
N/A

Documents relevant to Part E:
12/10 Guidelines for Publication from a Thesis or Dissertation or Research Project

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GUIDELINES 12/1
Devolved Supervisor and Research Proposal Approval

1.0 Preamble

These guidelines are not a substitute for reading, interpreting and implementing the intent of Policy 12 Conduct of Student Research. People using these Guidelines should refer in the first instance to the policy itself, and in the case of conflict, the policy shall prevail.

2.0 Introduction

The approval of level 9 research proposals (Masters) and the approval of supervisory arrangements for level 9 research is devolved to committees operating at the level of programmes or clusters of programmes. The Postgraduate Research and Scholarships Committee (PGRSC) are responsible for overseeing the operation of these devolved committees. The PGRSC is responsible for appointments to the register of supervisors, for the approval of research proposals at level 10 (Doctoral), and for other aspects of the administration of postgraduate research, such as thesis examination and scholarships.

1.0 Proposals Approval Committee Requirements

1 The Committee must adopt the guidelines for the submission and approval of student research proposals as outlined below.

2 The Committee must comprise at least the following members:

- A member of the Faculty Research Committee
- The Programme Director(s) of postgraduate degrees involved
- One member of the Programme Committee responsible for the postgraduate degree(s) involved
- An independent member (for instance, a research active person from another department or academic area)

3 The committee will be a stand-alone committee and not a sub-committee of another committee.

4 Proposals Committee membership must collectively address the following membership criteria:

- At least two members must be research active with preferably a PBRF category 'C' or equivalent

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    o   Members must be on the supervisors register (with at least one principal supervisor who must have a qualification equal to or greater than level of proposed study).

NOTE: The membership of Proposals Committees would ideally consist of a network of qualified people who cooperate and cross-fertilise good practice throughout the institution.

5 The Committee must be in a position to ensure that   student proposals are processed in a timely fashion.

6 The Committee must forward minutes of meetings in a timely fashion to the Postgraduate Academic Administrator for noting at the PGRSC, including details of non-approvals.

7 The Committee must maintain an accurate and efficient communication and filing system.

8 The Committee must follow the requirements of Academic Policy (12) and in particular 12/2 the Code for Supervision of Postgraduate Student Research.

9 The committee must ensure the appropriateness of the supervisory arrangements and be assured that the supervisors have the appropriate credentials (including being on the register of supervisors). The committee is also responsible for approving any changes to the arrangements while the research is underway.

3.0   Proposal Approval Process and Reporting

Committee decisions must be reported to the Postgraduate Academic Administrator to ensure coordination between the Unitec Research Ethics Committee (UREC), the PGRSC, the Supervisors Register, and recording of student research completions though the Research Office and Postgraduate Centre.

Steps in the process

1. Proposals Approval Committee secretary receives the proposal with all required signatures for distribution to members (this ensures that relevant parties e.g. HoD, Programme Director etc, are aware of the research and its implications).

2. The meeting is conducted, decisions are made and minutes are taken. The categories of decision are:

- Approval
- Approval with suggestions
- Approval with requirements (changes to be made to the satisfaction of various parties and to be verified by the Programme Director)
- Unable to approve (resubmit)

3. The outcome is reported to the student and to other relevant parties. The Postgraduate Academic Administrator is advised only when final approval is given.

GUIDELINES 12/2
Code for Supervision of Postgraduate Students Undertaking Research

1.0   Introduction

This Code is for the use of supervisors and students, with the intent that all postgraduate supervision is to be of a high standard. Adherence to the Code is mandatory for students and supervisors undertaking research at level 9 or 10. The Code is written in the belief that there is a reciprocal relationship and mutual accountability in supervision, and with respect for individual autonomy and the pursuit of knowledge.

2.0   Supervisors

2.1   Selection of Supervisors

Identification of supervisors is a process of negotiation involving the student, potential supervisors, Programme Director and Head of Department, with regard to the needs of the student, the requirements of the research, and the experience and work commitments of the potential supervisors. Supervisors are registered by the Postgraduate Research and Scholarships Committee, in accordance with the criteria listed in Academic Policy 12 Guideline 12/4. Supervisory arrangements for a particular piece of student research are approved when the relevant Proposals Approval Committee approves a student's research proposal.

Level 9 research projects of 45 credits may only have one supervisor provided that person is registered as a Principal Supervisor. The Programme Director has responsibility for monitoring the progress of all supervisions within that programme.

Once the relative roles of supervisors have been established, it is desirable that agreement is reached between the supervisors and the student as to the expectations, roles, and responsibilities of the various parties. This should be documented for future reference.

2.2   Role of Supervisors of Postgraduate Student Research

The Principal supervisor normally is the person to whom the student will turn for regular guidance, and will usually have specific relevant expertise. The student's Principal and Associate supervisor(s) must be able to provide him or her with access to the range of expertise necessary for successful completion. This includes access to appropriate methodological and discipline expertise, and experience in supervising students to completion. When this range of expertise cannot be met with a combination of Unitec staff, an external associate supervisor may be appointed.

The supervisors will:
- Discuss with the student and establish agreed roles, processes and responsibilities for supervisors and student throughout the course of the research. These matters should be agreed and documented at the outset.

- Provide guidance on relevant rules, policies, and regulations that govern research, in particular those related to proposal approval, submission, and examination.
- Provide information (such as *Guidelines for Presentation of Postgraduate Student Research 12/8*) and guidance on the form and structure of a research project, dissertation or thesis, including format and style.
- Provide guidance on the nature and standard of research appropriate to the level and credit value of the research project, dissertation or thesis.
- Provide guidance on research planning, management, and writing of research project, dissertation or thesis.
- Provide guidance on literature and information sources, and on research methods and techniques appropriate to the topic area and to the level and credit value of the research project, dissertation or thesis.
- Assist with the construction of a written time schedule which outlines the expected completion dates of successive stages of the research project, dissertation or thesis.
- Advise the student to retain all written correspondence and written records of discussions between the supervisors and the student.
- Retain all written correspondence as above.
- Maintain regular and frequent contact through formal scheduling (for example, on-site or distance tutorial or seminar meetings) and be accessible at reasonable times for providing the student with advice.
- Expect written work as appropriate, and return that work with constructive criticism within a timeframe agreed with the student.
- Where necessary, ensure that the student is made aware in writing of the inadequacy of progress and/or any work which is below acceptable standards.
- Enable the student to present work at postgraduate and/or staff seminars.
- Discuss the ownership of research conducted by the student (in accordance with the Unitec Policy on Intellectual Property), issues of co-authorship, and issues of copyright of published papers arising from the thesis (in accordance with the Guidelines on Publication 12/10).
- Provide guidance on any appropriate ethics approval processes and ensure that application forms are appropriately completed and submitted
- Ensure that all research is conducted in accordance with the Unitec Research Ethics Committee policies and procedures and any approvals that have been given.
- Be aware of any significant problems, either academic or personal, that might adversely affect a student's progress and advise students about support services available at Unitec.
- Complete progress reports on the research project as may be required.
- Provide particular guidance for students whose first language is not English as they may need more frequent supervision in the initial stages of the research and thesis, ensuring nonetheless that these students are aware that they are responsible for achieving the high standard of written English required in postgraduate research, and that detailed correction of and instruction in aspects of language and style are not the responsibility of the supervisor (see 12/9 Guidelines for Proof Reading and Editing Student Research). The assistance needed may include referrals for language training and assistance in academic writing.

2.3 Unavailability of Supervisors

- If any supervisor is likely to be absent, the student should be advised as soon as possible of the expected absence. The supervisor has the obligation, where possible, to inform the student prior to accepting the role of supervisor of any significant intended absence or to inform the student of the distance supervision arrangements that will be in place.
- If the absence or unavailability of a supervisor would be likely to disadvantage student progress, a substitute supervisor will be appointed. Any change of supervisor will be approved by the relevant Proposals Approval Committee.

3.0 Students

3.1 Students' Responsibilities

Students are expected to:

- Discuss with the supervisors and establish agreed roles and clear processes to be maintained amongst the Supervisors and the Student.
- Write a time schedule which outlines the expected completion dates of successive stages of the research. Establish, in conjunction with the supervisors, a date for final submission of the thesis.
- Reflect on the advice and instruction provided by the supervisors. In consultation with the supervisors, the student will determine the applicability and suitability of that advice and instruction for the satisfactory progress of the research.
- Maintain regular contact with the supervisor and keep the supervisor informed of relevant progress.
- Be pro-active in raising matters which may be detrimental to satisfactory progress on the thesis.
- Maintain progress in accordance with the agreed stages and timing of the research and thesis.
- Provide such evidence of work and documentation as may reasonably be requested and required by the supervisors.
- Familiarise themselves with all relevant degree regulations, and with requirements for the presentation of their research work for examination.
- Be adequately prepared for each meeting with the supervisors.
- Retain all written correspondence and written records of discussions between the supervisors and the student.
- Have and keep documented evidence, where necessary, that the research project, dissertation or thesis is their own work, and that in the process of having assistance with language and style, the substance of the written work is nonetheless unreservedly theirs. Any contribution from outside sources must be acknowledged and must be in accordance with the Guidelines on Proof Reading and Editing of Student Research 12/9.

4.0 Mediation and Unsatisfactory Progress

If students consider that their work is not proceeding satisfactorily for reasons outside their control, or if they consider that the supervision arrangements/agreements are not being upheld, they should present their concerns in writing to their Programme Director for resolution. If the Programme Director is unable to assist then the student should contact their Head of

Department. If the Head of Department is unable to assist then students should contact their Faculty Dean. Students may seek the support of the USU Advocate at any stage.

GUIDELINES 12/3
Code for Supervision of
Undergraduate Students Undertaking
Research

1.0   Introduction

This Code is for the use of supervisors and students, with the intent that all student supervision is to be of a high standard. Adherence to the Code is mandatory for students and supervisors undertaking a substantial piece of student research (≥ 15 credits) at level 7 or 8. The Code is written in the belief that there is a reciprocal relationship and mutual accountability in supervision, and with respect for individual autonomy and the pursuit of knowledge.

2.0   Supervisors

2.1   Selection of Supervisors

The selection of supervisors may be conducted either;

> (i) At the discretion of the Programme Committee, or
> (ii) By the student in consultation with the Course Co-ordinator.

In the case of (i), the Course Co-ordinator is responsible for informing the student of the outcome and ensuring that the supervision arrangements are established.

In the case of (ii), when the broad area for the research project has been identified, the Course Co-ordinator provides students with a list of potential supervisors approved by the Programme Committee. Individual negotiation may then be undertaken between the student and potential supervisors until there is a supervisor who is prepared and qualified to supervise the student for the proposed project. The supervision arrangement is endorsed by the Programme Director on the advice of the Course Co-ordinator before the supervision is established.

The expertise of the supervisor will be in:

* the general subject area of the project, and/or;
* the area of research methodology/ies being used in the project.

The supervisor will:

* have a qualification that is at the same level or higher than that for which the student is enrolled, and/or;
* have in depth knowledge of current developments in expertise area;

- guide students to complete a project which fulfils the programme aims and objectives;
- have relevant professional and/or research experience in the area in which the student is enrolled, and/or;
- have successfully carried out research to completion.

Where staff have expertise in the subject area, but do not meet all the criteria above, they can be appointed as assistant supervisors to the supervisor. Supervisors will abide by relevant policies, guidelines and codes.

2.2   Supervisors' Responsibilities
The supervisor is the person to whom the student will turn for regular guidance.

The Supervisor will:

- Discuss with the student and establish agreed roles and clear processes to be maintained between the supervisor and the student.
- Affirm/confirm the availability of required resources.
- Provide the student with this Code for Supervision of Undergraduate Research which establishes mutual responsibilities and obligations throughout the research process.
- Provide information and guidance on the form and structure of the project, including format and style.
- Provide guidance on the nature of research and on the standard of research that is appropriate to the level and credit value of the project.
- Provide guidance for the student on research management including developing research proposals, scoping a problem, research objectives, integrating the research across the project, writing objectives for each section of the proposed project, and on requirements for ethical approval.
- Provide guidance on literature and information sources, and on research methods and techniques appropriate to the topic area and to the level and credit value of the project. (This may include notifying the student of required attendance at taught courses and at tutorials and seminars, and arranging, where necessary, for other relevant instruction).
- Assist with the construction of a written time schedule which outlines the expected completion dates of successive stages of the project.
- Advise the student to retain all written correspondence and written records of discussions between the supervisor and the student.
- Maintain regular contact through formal scheduling and be accessible at reasonable times for providing the student with advice that is sought.
- Request written work as appropriate, and return that work with constructive criticism within a timeframe negotiated with the student.
- Provide the student with written appraisal of progress at intervals agreed with the student at the outset of the research/ or at other times as mutually agreed.

- Ensure that the student is made aware of insufficient progress or an unacceptable standard of work (if necessary, in writing). Acceptability will be according to criteria previously supplied to the student.
- Assist the student with the opportunity to present or publish work if appropriate.
- Discuss Unitec policies regarding the ownership of research conducted by the student, issues of intellectual property, co-authorship, and issues of copyright of published papers arising from the project, subject to institute policy
- Where necessary, ensure that all research is conducted with prior ethical approval.
- Provide particular guidance for EAL students who may need more frequent supervision in the initial stages of the research project. The assistance needed may include referrals for language training and assistance in academic writing.
- Ensure, nonetheless, that EAL students are aware that they are responsible for achieving the high standard of written English required in the report, and that detailed correction of and instruction in aspects of language and style are not the responsibility of the supervisor.

2.3   Unavailability of Supervisors

For research projects the prospective supervisor should ensure as far as possible that s/he will not be absent for extended periods before accepting the role. If an unexpected absence occurs, an appropriately qualified replacement supervisor shall be recommended by the Course Co-ordinator from the approved programme list.

3.0   Students
3.1   Students' Responsibilities

Students are expected to:

- Discuss with the supervisor and establish agreed roles and clear processes to be maintained between the supervisor and the student.
- Write a research project proposal and a time schedule which outlines the expected completion dates of successive stages of the project. Establish, in conjunction with the supervisor, a date for final submission of the project.
- Reflect on the advice and instruction provided by the supervisor. In consultation with the supervisor, the student will determine the applicability and suitability of that advice and instruction for the satisfactory progress of the project.
- Be pro-active in raising matters which may be detrimental to satisfactory progress on the project.
- Maintain progress in accordance with the agreed stages and timing of the research and project report.
- Provide such evidence of work and documentation as may reasonably be requested and required by the supervisor from time to time to enable them to ensure that the student is progressing satisfactorily and according to the agreed time schedule.
- Be familiar with the contents of the requisite materials which have been supplied on the process of research and form required for the presentation of the project, including the Handbook, Regulations and written instructions governing the specific course.
- Be adequately prepared for each meeting with the supervisor.

- Have and keep documented evidence, where necessary, that the required aspects of the project are their own work, and that in the process of having editorial assistance with language and style, the presentation of the project is nonetheless unreservedly theirs. Any contribution from outside sources must be acknowledged.
- Discuss with the supervisor if they consider that their work is not proceeding satisfactorily for reasons outside their control.

4.0   Mediation and Unsatisfactory Progress

If students consider that the terms of the Code for Supervision of Undergraduate Research are not being upheld, they should in the first instance raise this with their supervisor. If the matter is not resolved, or if they feel unable to approach the supervisor, they should discuss their concerns with the Course Co-ordinator, the Programme Director or the Head of the Department where these people are not directly involved with supervision. Where matters are not resolved, students should present their concerns in writing to the relevant Programme Committee or Faculty Dean for problem resolution. Students may seek the support of the USU Advocate at any stage.

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GUIDELINES 12/4
Guidelines and Criteria for Appointing Supervisors

1.0   Preamble

These guidelines are to assist with the operationalisation of Policy 12 Conduct of Student Research. Those using these Guidelines should refer in the first instance to the policy itself, and in the case of conflict, the policy shall prevail.

2.0   Appointing Supervisors

The Postgraduate Research and Scholarships Committee oversee supervisor appointment at level 10 (Doctoral). For level 9 programmes the responsibility for appointing supervisors is devolved to committees representing programmes or clusters of programmes.

Candidates undertaking research worth 60 credits or more shall have at least two supervisors. Candidates undertaking research worth 45 credits may have one supervisor, provided that person is listed on the Register of Principal Supervisors.

All supervisors normally will be listed on the Unitec's Supervisors Register and at least one supervisor will be on the Principal Supervisors' register.

Committees approving research proposals will ascertain that the combination of strengths of the proposed supervisors provides appropriate support for the student being supervised.

External (that is, non-Unitec staff) associate supervisors may be appointed where criteria cannot be met by a combination of Unitec staff.

Substitute supervisors
If the absence or unavailability of a supervisor would be likely to disadvantage student progress, a substitute supervisor will be appointed. Any change of supervisor will be approved by the relevant Proposals Committee.

2.1   Supervisor Registration

The Postgraduate Research and Scholarships Committee approve applications for supervisor registration and maintain the register.

The following criteria apply for registration as a supervisor.

A Principal Supervisor should have:
1. A degree higher, or equivalent to, the degree being supervised;
2. Experience of supervising students to the successful completion of a postgraduate degree (with a thesis, dissertation or research project worth at least 90 credits);
3. Have undertaken professional development relevant to supervision;
4. Have a credible research record in the discipline in the last five years; and
5. Hold an academic appointment at Unitec.

An Associate Supervisor should:

1. Have a degree higher or equivalent to the degree being supervised, or a relevant degree and significant professional experience, and;
2. Have a research record that includes quality assured research outputs in the last five years.

Application for Supervisor Registration

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Name	
Position/Department	
Academic qualifications	
Applying for: Masters Associate ☐ Masters Principal ☐ Doctoral Associate ☐ Doctoral Principal ☐	
Research Supervisory Experience: (Provide details of previous supervisions including names, titles, degree names, completion dates, and describe your role in the supervision)	
Methodological expertise: (Provide full details and do not rely solely on the terms qualitative/quantitative)	
Professional Development: (Provide details on any professional development undertaken with regard to supervision)	
Publications: (Attach a list of relevant publications for the past five years. Include full publication details in the format required by the Unitec Research Report)	

Signature   ———————————————

Date   ———————————————

Criteria for Supervisor Registration

A Principal Supervisor should have:
1. a degree higher, or equivalent to, the degree being supervised;
2. experience of supervising students to the successful completion of a postgraduate degree (with a thesis, dissertation or research project worth at least 90 credits);
3. Have undertaken professional development relevant to supervision;
4. Have a credible research record in the discipline in the last five years; and
5. Hold an academic appointment at Unitec.

An Associate Supervisor should:
1. Have a degree higher or equivalent to the degree being supervised, or a relevant degree and significant professional experience, and;
2. Have a research record that includes quality assured research outputs in the last five years.

Committees approving research proposals will ascertain that the combination of strengths of the proposed supervisors provides appropriate support for the student being supervised.

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GUIDELINES 12/5
Overview of Research Proposal Process

1.0 Overview of Research Proposal Approval Process

Research proposals are considered by a committee with the delegated authority of the Postgraduate Research and Scholarships Committee.

The following is an overview of the approval process:

	Process
Step 1.	Research proposal received with all required signatures and distributed to committee members.
Step 2.	Decision made at committee meeting. Decision may be one of the following: 1. Approved (at first submission); 2. Approved with suggestions; 3. Approved with requirements to satisfaction of supervisors and programme director or discipline leader; 4. Unable to approve / requirement to resubmit; 5. Final approval (when conditions met or satisfactory resubmission made). Decisions recorded in committee minutes. Minutes and proposal report sent to Postgraduate Academic Administrator. Student notified of decision and copy of letter sent to Postgraduate Academic Administrator, supervisors, head of department, and programme directors.
Step 2a.	For decision categories 3 and 4 the student modifies the proposal in line with stated requirements and submits a revised proposal and research proposal submission form for approval. For decision category 3 the committee must give final approval if the programme director or discipline leader certifies the requirements have been met. For decision category 4 the committee retains discretion to approve or decline the resubmitted research proposal for research proposals resubmitted after an initial decision.
Step 3.	The student may seek research ethics approval once his or her research proposal has been approved (decision categories 1, 2 or 5). The committee secretary sends a copy of the letter notifying the student of approval to the Unitec Research Ethics Committee (UREC) Secretary.
Step 4.	Approved (decision categories 1, 2, or 5) proposals are filed with the Postgraduate Academic Administrator.

GUIDELINES 12/6
Guidelines for Level 9 Research Proposals

Before embarking on your research project it is necessary to complete and submit a Research Proposal to the appropriate **Proposal Committee**. This is Stage One. Once this has been approved you can then submit (if needed) your proposal for Ethics Approval by the **Unitec Research Ethics Committee** (Stage Two). Appropriate forms for **Ethics Approval** can be accessed from the Postgraduate Centre, the H: Drive, J: (Student) Drive and Blackboard.

Stage One: The Proposal

Your research proposal provides an initial statement of your intended topic and your research methods. It provides your supervisors, programme director, and the Proposals Committee with evidence that you have thought enough about your proposed research to be able to embark effectively on a systematic plan of study. It serves to:

- Explain your research intentions. The more clearly and thoroughly you do this, the better able we will be to provide you with useful advice and assistance.

- Outline the ways in which you intend to carry out your research action, and explain why these are appropriate to your topic.

- Ensure that you, your supervisors, your programme director and the Proposal Committee have a common understanding of what you intend to do.

The research proposal is developed with your anticipated supervisors as your first task after enrolling for the research component in your degree.

Your proposal should be no more than **5000 words, and should include** all of the following 10 sections. Please check with your Programme Director for any requirements specific to your programme. Please submit the electronic copy of the proposal in a **Word** format and provide a word count for the document.

1.   Working Title
This is an early indication of the focus for your project and may be changed at a later date.

2.   Outline of the project:
Description of what you intend to do, and why—that is, what significance or importance does it have, and why it is worth doing.

Aims/Objectives of the Project. This should include
- The purpose of the project;
- The research question(s);

- The hypothesis to be tested (if appropriate); and
- The nature of the information sought.

3.   Literature Background

Give a concise summary (but not an annotated bibliography) of a cross-section of significant relevant literature, regarding the state of knowledge or opinion about the proposed research topic. Ensure that the literature supports and contextualizes your topic and indicates your awareness of relevant issues and disagreements within previous research. Identify any possible gaps in the knowledge as indicated by your key sources, and indicate what addition to existing literature your completed study will make.

4.   Methodology/Research Method

Explain why your selected research approach is appropriate to your topic and your stated objectives.

The discipline in which you work may require you to develop your research plan as your research unfolds. If you intend to use such an "emerging plan" for your project you still need to explain the following:
- why this approach is appropriate for your area/topic/approach;
- how research questions will be identified, and how they will be answered;
- how the project design will be developed.

5   Methods of Data Collection and Analysis

Detail the proposed methods and techniques to be used for data collection, with specific details of sample size and criteria for selection of participants, where appropriate. Indicate how you expect to analyse your data. You are not required to attach questionnaires or questions for focus groups unless they serve to amplify or clarify elements of your research design.

6   Ethics Issues

While you probably will need to gain approval for your research project from the Unitec Research Ethics Committee, it is useful to explain in your proposal any ethical issues that you identify as pertinent.   Your supervisors will advise if ethical approval can be obtained from within the Department.

7   A Time Line or Gantt Chart

Outline the scheduling of activities for the period of your research.

8   Resource Issues

Outline any resourcing issues that are relevant to the project, such as equipment, software or laboratory costs. Also include possible conference attendance and any anticipated support.

9   Outcomes/Outputs

Indicate uses to which your research may be put. Suggest any likely outputs (papers and conference presentations) and outcomes (the possible difference that the research will make to society, professionals or the community).

10   Reference List

Provide references for all sources mentioned in the proposal. Use a style appropriate to the discipline.

What to avoid in your proposal

The following are some of the common **weaknesses** in submitted proposals:

- Lack of concise statement for purpose of project or objective of project not clearly defined.
- Unclear or insufficient research questions articulated.
- Inadequate literature or literature not linked adequately to the topic/research question.
- Rationale for data collection methods not given.
- Sample size not specified or rationale given for selection of participants.
- Possible outcomes are not described.

How to submit the proposal

When your intended supervisors and Programme Director agree that your proposal is ready to submit, please send it electronically (in a **WORD** format) to the Proposal Committee secretary. In addition, you must provide hard copy of the two following items:

- The completed **Proposal**.
- The **Submission Form** signed by your intended supervisors, your programme director, and yourself.   Your proposal will not be considered unless these signatures are included.

Approval Process

Proposals are considered by the Proposal Committee. Meeting dates are available from your Programme Director. You will receive written notification from the Chair of the Proposal Committee regarding the outcome of the Committee's consideration of your proposal. You may be asked to make revisions, or to re-submit your proposal.

Unitec
NEW ZEALAND
Te Whare Wānanga o Wairaka

12/7
Postgraduate Research Proposal Submission Form

Date Received by the Department of :_____

Please return copy to the Research Office & Postgraduate Centre
GENERAL INFORMATION

1. LEVEL 9 RESEARCH TITLE:	
Conducted at:	Unitec Institute of Technology
Degree:	
Course Credit Value:	

2. POSTGRADUATE STUDENT	
Name:	
Current Address:	
Department:	
Phone No.	
Email address	
Student ID No.	
Initial year of enrolment :	**Full-time** **Part-time**

Please note that proposals will not be considered without the following signatures.

3. PRINCIPAL/ASSOCIATE SUPERVISORS

PRINCIPAL SUPERVISOR

Name:	
Department:	
Comments and signature:	

ASSOCIATE SUPERVISOR (S)

Name:	
Department:	
Comments and signature:	

4. PROGRAMME DIRECTOR

Comments:

Signature of Programme Director: _____   **Date:** _____

Print Full Name: _____

Signature of Applicant: _____   **Date:** _____

Print Full Name: _____

5. HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Signature of Head of Department: _____ *Date:* _____

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	Guidelines 12/8 **Guidelines for the Presentation of Postgraduate Student Research**

1.0   Introduction

This document indicates general guidelines for thesis/dissertation/research project presentation. Individual programmes may have their own degree-specific requirements. Candidates should check the requirements with their supervisors before embarking on their work.

2.0   Language

There are two official languages in New Zealand: Te Reo Maori and English. Theses/ dissertations/Research Projects can be presented in either of these languages, except where Programme Regulations specify limitations.

3.0   General requirements

3.1   For examination purposes a candidate must submit three soft bound copies of the thesis/dissertation/research project to the Research Office and Postgraduate Centre office. Upon submission the candidate will receive a receipt confirming number of copies and date of submission.

3.2   The copies of the thesis/dissertation/research project to be submitted for examination must be clearly legible, carefully edited and paginated. Any figures, photographs, illustrations, maps, graphs, charts, etc., contained in the thesis or dissertation must also be clear. Photographic reproductions should be consistent in all copies.

3.3   Theses, dissertations, and research projects will not be accepted for examination unless the student is enrolled in the relevant courses at the time he/she submits the work, and unless a signed Declaration Form is provided at the time of the submission (see below).

3.4   Once examination is successfully completed, two hard bound copies and one electronic copy must be submitted to the Research Office and Postgraduate Centre (one for the School, one for the Library and one electronic copy for Unitec's institutional repository). The electronic copy must be identical to the hard bound copy. Extra copies should be produced for personal use if needed.

The preferred format of the digital (electronic) version is Microsoft Word. The following formats are acceptable:
- ✓   PDF
- ✓   Word (.doc for PC or .mcw for Mac)
- ✓   Rich Text Form (.rtf)
- ✓   HTML (.html) – only where work submitted is a website

Where possible, the students should submit their entire thesis/dissertation/research project in one electronic file.

For technical assistance email the Library - library@unitec.ac.nz

4.0   Style and format

4.1   Supervisors must be consulted for advice on departmental requirements and preferences. These are often specified in Programme Handbooks.

4.2   The recommended order of material in a thesis/dissertation/research project is as follows, however, supervisors should be consulted as to mandatory requirements:

- Declaration Form (see below)
- Title-page
- Abstract
- List of pre-publications (if appropriate)
- Preface and/or acknowledgments
- Table of contents
- List of tables, figures, photographs, maps, illustrations, glossary, or abbreviations
- Text
- Bibliography/list of references
- Appendices

4.3   *Declaration Form*
See below

4.4.   *Title-page*

The title of the thesis/dissertation/research project should be centred in the top third of the title-page, and should describe the content of the thesis/ dissertation/research project accurately and precisely. The author's (candidate's) full name is centred in the middle of the title-page. Information regarding the degree, subject, tertiary institution, and date is centred in the lower third of the page. The preferred form of wording is: 'A thesis (or dissertation or research project) submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

....

Unitec Institute of Technology, 20XX

4.5   *Abstract*
Each copy of every thesis/dissertation/research project must include a short abstract which should not exceed 350 words in the case of a masterate, or 1000 words for a PhD.

4.6   *Preface and/or Acknowledgments*
A preface may set out briefly the scope and purpose of the study, though the wording of the abstract may make this redundant. This section may include, or be confined to, acknowledgments, and in the latter case should be headed 'Acknowledgments'. Persons or institutions acknowledged should be those who have contributed to the content of the thesis/dissertation/research project.

4.7   *Table of contents*
This should list chapter titles and subheadings as required.
If a thesis/dissertation/research project consists of more than one volume, the contents of the *whole* thesis/dissertation/research project should be shown in the first volume, and the contents of subsequent volumes in separate tables of contents in the relevant volumes.

4.8   *Lists*

Tables, figures, photographs, maps and illustrations should be listed in a format acceptable to the discipline.

4.9   *Abbreviations*

Any abbreviations used should be separately listed in this section. Place the abbreviation in a left-hand column, with the full form to its right.

4.10   *Text*

This comprises the main body of the thesis/dissertation/research project.

4.11   *Bibliography/List of References*

This section should be arranged alphabetically by author. The decision to present either a bibliography (which lists items read and cited) or a list of references (which lists only cited items) should be negotiated with the candidate's supervisor.

It is important that citations be consistent in style, though the system chosen can depend on your subject field. Information on forms of documentation can be found in the Unitec Library or through your supervisor.

4.12   *Appendices*

Any additional material which, although pertinent, does not fit conveniently in the body of the text may be included here.

5.0   Format 1: Paper and Binding

5.1   All copies submitted to the postgraduate office for examination are soft bound (three copies are submitted – allowing two copies for examiners and a further copy in reserve in case another examiner or an adjudicator is appointed).

Once examination is successfully completed hard bound copies and one electronic copy need to be submitted as noted above**.**

5.2   *Thesis/dissertation/research project cover*
The thesis/dissertation/research project title should be placed in the centre of the top third ofthe front cover. The candidate's name should be centred in the middle of the cover. The year of submission should be centred in the bottom third.

5.3   *Thesis/Dissertation/Research Project spine*
The candidate's name and the year of submission should feature on the spine of the thesis/dissertation/research project, with the year placed to the right of the name.

5.4   Paper must be of good quality, and of a suitable texture and weight for the method of production and any reprography. A4 is usual, although other sizes in the 'A' range may be acceptable according to the requirements of the candidate's department or supervisor.

5.5   Lines must be one and a half spaced and presented on one side of the paper only (single-sided copying). Margins should be adequate for binding (20mm on the left is standard).

5.6   Page numbers should be located in a consistent position throughout the thesis/dissertation/research project. They may be either centred at the bottom of the page, or appear at the top right corner of the page. The preliminary pages (title-page, abstract,

preface, table of contents, list of tables, etc.) are usually numbered in lower-case Roman numerals (i, ii, iii, etc.) - the first page counted, but not numbered, being the title-page.

6.0   Format 2: Electronic format

If an examiner indicates they wish to be supplied with an electronic version of the thesis/dissertation/research project, in addition to the printed version, candidates would then be requested to supply the thesis/dissertation/research project electronically or on CD-Rom. Any electronic version of the document supplied must be identical to the printed version (where possible).

7.0   Copyright

Copyright belongs to the author, though modified by the special conditions outlined under Unitec's policy on intellectual property. In general, matters of copyright are governed by the Copyright Act 1994.

8.0   Embargo

Examined postgraduate research covered by Academic Policy 12 will normally be available for public access unless there are compelling reasons for restricting access to it. A work may be embargoed for a specified limited period if it contains confidential or sensitive material that might breach prior agreements with outside organisations, or it contains commercially sensitive information that might jeopardise an application for a patent, license or registration, or there are good reasons for non-disclosure of the contents consistent with the provisions of the Privacy Act (1993) or the Official Information Act (1982).

A student may apply in writing to the Dean, Research for approval to embargo a work. The application shall outline the reasons for the embargo and provide evidence of the supervisor's support for the application. Embargoed work shall be held with the office of the Dean, Research until such time as the embargo period has ended. The work shall then be lodged with the library.

Declaration

Name of candidate:

This Thesis/Dissertation/Research Project entitled   is submitted in partial fulfilment for the requirements for the Unitec degree of

CANDIDATE'S DECLARATION

I confirm that:

- This Thesis/Dissertation/Research Project represents my own work;

- Research for this work has been conducted in accordance with the Unitec Research Ethics Committee Policy and Procedures, and has fulfilled any requirements set for this project by the Unitec Research Ethics Committee.

  Research Ethics Committee Approval Number:

Candidate Signature: ……….…………………………………….Date: …………………

Student number: …………………………

GUIDELINES 12/9
Guidelines for Proof-reading and Editing Student Research

1.0   Preamble

These guidelines are not a substitute for reading, interpreting and implementing the intent of Policy 12 Conduct of Student Research. People using these Guidelines should refer in the first instance to the policy itself, and in the case of conflict, the policy shall prevail.

2.0 Introduction

These guidelines are intended to clarify the extent to which external paid assistance may be involved in the preparation of the final version of a thesis/dissertation prior to submission. It is expected that the product of student research is a product that represents the student's own work.

3.0 Guidelines

The following are the Oxford Dictionary definitions of proof-reading and editing:

Proof-reading is reading and marking errors.

Editing is assembling, preparing, modifying, condensing, preparing an edition, being in overall charge of content and arrangement, altering text etc.

A proof-reader looks for typographical errors and inconsistencies and marks where they are; this is acceptable (as long as the student meets any costs involved) whereas editing is making of changes.

Proofing by another person (excluding supervisors) is acceptable, editing by another person, is not. This is to distinguish between marking errors as opposed to changing words and meaning.

Guidelines 12/10
Guidelines for Publication from a Thesis or Dissertation or Research Project

1.0   Introduction

It is important for Unitec's reputation that manuscripts submitted to external publishers are of high quality as research publications, particularly refereed publications, are a major performance indicator for tertiary institutions. All publications of staff and students at Unitec will be of high quality and will be recorded institutionally.

2.0   Implementation

Peer Review

It is recommended that manuscripts authored or co-authored by staff and students be submitted in a peer reviewed outlet. Student work being submitted for grading or marking (as opposed to publication) to a tertiary institution (Unitec or elsewhere), does not constitute peer review, even if the student is a staff member.

Authorship of Papers from Postgraduate Theses, Dissertations or Research Projects

Authorship based on supervised research by graduate students should be discussed before the papers are written. Usually students who write the papers (it is part of the learning and development process) are the first author, and supervisors are named as co-authors. This is subject to negotiation. Supervisors should review such papers before submission.

These conditions apply whether papers are submitted before or after the student leaving Unitec. Normal rules for determining authorship should apply.[1]

Recording of Publications

Students/staff should present a copy of each publication (as they appear in the press or immediately following publication) for recording and inclusion in the annual publication report.

Acknowledgement.   This policy is based on documents from Lincoln and Massey University.

1 Extract from the NHMRC/AVCC Statement and Guidelines on Research Practice
"3.1 Each institution must establish a written policy on the criteria for authorship of a research output. Minimum requirement for authorship should accord with the "Vancouver Protocol" [the medical research convention]. Authorship is substantial participation, where all the following conditions are met:
a. conception and design, or analysis and interpretation of data; and
b. drafting the article or revising it critically for important intellectual content; and
c. final approval of the version to be published.
Participation solely in the acquisition of funding or the collection of data does not justify authorship. General supervision of the research group is not sufficient for authorship. Any part of an article critical to its main conclusion must be the responsibility of at least one author. An author's role in a research output must be sufficient for that person to take public responsibility for at least that part of the output in that person's area of expertise. No person who is an author, consistent with this definition, must be excluded as an author without their permission, in writing."