
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy Statute

Research Policy Group

1 Purpose

The PhD Statute sets out the regulations governing the admission, enrolment, registration, supervision, and examination procedures for the PhD degree at Victoria University of Wellington. It also stipulates the criteria on which the award of the degree will be based. This Statute must be read in conjunction with the [PhD Policy: Approving, Enrolling, Supervising and Examining PhD Candidates](#).

2 Organisational Scope

This is a University-wide statute.

3 Definitions

For purposes of this statute, unless otherwise stated, the following definitions shall apply:

Administrative Supervisor:	The person in the School with responsibility for administering the candidacy. The Administrative Supervisor must ensure that the candidate and the supervisors follow the regulations for the PhD Degree.
Associate Dean:	The person designated by the Dean of the Faculty for the purpose of this Statute.
Full-time PhD Student:	Students are deemed to be full-time when they are able to devote a minimum of 30 hours per week to the thesis, on average, over the year. This workload excludes statutory holiday periods.
Half-time PhD Student:	Students who cannot work on the thesis for the amount of time specified above are deemed to be half-time students
PhD Convener:	Convener of the Research Degrees Committee.
Research Degrees Committee (RDC):	The University body responsible for the oversight of the PhD and Master's by Thesis.
Supervisor:	A supervisor is a person who is appointed to provide academic and administrative guidance to the candidate during their enrolment for the degree.

4 Statute Content and Guidelines

4.1 Admission

- (a) A candidate for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy shall, before enrolment:

- (i) have qualified for admission to a Bachelor's or Master's degree with First or Second Class Honours or a Master's degree at an equivalent standard to First or Second class honours at a university in New Zealand; or
 - (ii) be currently enrolled in a Master's by thesis; or
 - (iii) produce evidence to the satisfaction of the Associate Dean of adequate training and ability to proceed with the proposed course for the degree.
- (b) Candidates must not only show themselves to be qualified but must also be accepted by the Head of School and relevant Associate Dean.
- (c) Where a candidate is accepted under clause 4.1 (a) (ii), the candidate will be deemed to have first enrolled for the Doctor of Philosophy on the date of first enrolment for the Master's degree.

4.2 Conditions of Enrolment

- (a) Initially a candidate shall be provisionally registered as a candidate for the Doctor of Philosophy
- (i) Full registration is conditional on satisfactory progress during the provisional period, and must be confirmed by the Associate Dean on the advice of the Head of School within 15 months of first enrolment, otherwise the candidate's registration will be terminated.
 - (ii) Any coursework undertaken in accordance with section 4.4(a) must be completed prior to confirmation of full registration.
 - (iii) Once full registration has been confirmed, the date of registration shall be deemed to be the date of first enrolment for the degree
- (b) With full-time enrolment, the minimum period of registration will be 24 months and with half-time enrolment, the minimum period of registration will be 36 months.

4.3 Re-enrolment, Termination, Suspension and Extension

- (a) A candidate pursuing a course of study for the degree shall re-enrol within one month of the expiry of the period of previous enrolment.
- (b) Every year of enrolment in May and November, the supervisors of a candidate shall submit a report on the progress of the candidate to the Administrative Supervisor and the Student and Academic Services Office. If progress is reported to be unsatisfactory, the Associate Dean may, subject to any submission or appeal a candidate may make, terminate the enrolment.
- (c) On application from a candidate, the Associate Dean may grant a suspension of enrolment, measured in monthly increments, for a period of not less than one month, and not more than twelve months. During a student's candidature, the total period of suspension shall not usually exceed twelve months. During suspension of enrolment the candidate will pay no fees and will have no access to university services, including supervision and the library.
- (d) The thesis shall be presented within four years from the date of registration for candidates who have been enrolled full-time and within six years for candidates who have been enrolled exclusively half-time. In the case of candidates who have been permitted to change between full- and half-time, the submission times will be calculated on a pro rata basis. This excludes any period(s) of suspension.

- (e) Extensions to the due date of the thesis may be granted, on application to the Research Degrees Committee, through the Associate Dean. Extensions shall be granted only in exceptional circumstances, where good cause is shown, and will not usually exceed twelve months. All calculations will exclude any periods of suspension.

4.4 Course of Study

- (a) The course of study for a PhD consists of a programme of research and the writing of a thesis carried out under supervision. During the period of provisional enrolment, this may include enrolment in courses relating to and/or necessary for the development of a full research proposal, but the courses taken shall not normally exceed 60 points in total.
 - (i) The research will normally be conducted at Victoria University of Wellington, but with permission of the Associate Dean, part of the research programme may be carried out at locations outside the University.
 - (ii) The thesis must be a body of work that demonstrates the candidate's ability to carry out independent research, and constitutes a significant and original contribution to knowledge or understanding. This contribution may include critical, experimental, theoretical or creative components, but the end result must be a single integrated study.
 - (iii) The thesis may include the candidate's previously published work or material based on previous research, as long as the report constituting the thesis is written under supervision during the period of registration.
- (b) The thesis shall not exceed a total of 100,000 words in length (including scholarly apparatus). In exceptional circumstances the Research Degrees Committee may grant permission for a longer thesis to be submitted for examination.
- (c) Any application for [Withholding of Theses](#) should be made as early as possible in the research project and well before submission.

4.5 Examination

- (a) At any time after the minimum period of enrolment, a candidate may submit their thesis and apply for examination.
- (b) Where any work relevant to the thesis has been published, or accepted for publication at the time of submission, a statement shall be included showing how the published work relates to the thesis.
- (c) Where any of the published material included in clause 4.5 (b) is co-authored, the candidate must provide a detailed statement of each author's contribution to such work, and contact details of co-authors (see the [Recognition of Authorship Policy](#)).
- (d) The application for examination shall be accompanied by a statement from the supervisors that the candidate has pursued the course in accordance with the requirements of this statute.
- (e) The format of the thesis is determined by the [Library Statute](#) (see Clause 4.12 of the [Library Statute](#)).
- (f) The thesis shall be examined by three examiners, appointed by the Research Degrees Committee (RDC). One of these examiners will normally be from outside New Zealand. The principal supervisor or co-supervisor must not be an examiner.

- (g) The Associate Dean shall, after consultation with the examiners, make a report on the whole examination to the RDC, who will determine whether the degree be awarded.
- (h) Where the decision has been made to award the degree, it will be awarded upon the deposit of copies of the final thesis in the University Library in accordance with the [Library Statute](#).
- (i) The Associate Dean may on the application of the candidate or the supervisors at any time before the submission of the thesis, or on the recommendation of the examiners after the submission of the thesis, approve the enrolment of the candidate in a subject for an appropriate Master's degree instead of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, where the statute for such Master's degree provides that the degree may be taken by thesis and where the candidate does not already hold that degree in the same subject in this university.
 - (i) Where any thesis has been submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy that thesis may be accepted in fulfilment of the requirements for the Master's degree, notwithstanding any other provision in the Statute for that Master's degree.
 - (ii) In any other case, provided that the candidate has been enrolled for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy for that period, the candidate shall be deemed to have been enrolled in and to have followed a course of study for that Master's degree for the appropriate minimum period.

5 Legislative Compliance

Though the University is required to manage its policy documentation within a legislative framework; there is no specific legislation directing this statute.

6 References

[Library Statute](#)

[PhD Policy: Approving, Enrolling, Supervising and Examining PhD Candidates](#)

[Recognition of Authorship Policy](#)

[Withholding of Theses](#)

Previous version: [archived Doctor of Philosophy Statute 20080330](#)

7 Appendices

None

8 Approval Agency

University Council

9 Approval Dates

This statute was originally approved:	Pre 1990
This version was approved on:	31 March 2008
This version takes effect from:	31 March 2008
This statute will be reviewed by:	20 March 2010

10 Statute Sponsor

Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research)

11 Contact Person

The following person may be approached on a routine basis in relation to this statute:

Dr. Theresa Sawicka
Research Manager
Extn. 5190