

POLICY FOR AWARDING OF HIGHER DOCTORATES AT UNE

Document data:

Document Type:	Policies & Procedures
Administering Entity:	Academic Board
TRIM Ref:	SED05/71
Date Board endorsement:	30 June 2003
Date Approved:	7 October 2005
Approved by:	UNE Council
Indicative time for Review:	October 2006
Responsibility for Review:	Academic Board in consultation with the Doctoral Committee

Related Policies or other documents:

AWARDING OF HIGHER DOCTORATES AT UNE POLICY

(with effect from 1 January 2004)

1. General

UNE has established a number of higher doctorate awards, all of which are encompassed by this policy¹. A higher doctorate may be awarded for an original research contribution of distinguished merit that adds substantially to the knowledge and understanding of any branch of learning, including creative arts, with which a specific UNE Faculty is concerned.

2. Admission to Candidature

- 2.1. An applicant for admission to candidature for a higher doctorate degree shall normally have been an active researcher or professional in their nominated discipline for a period of at least 10 years; *and*
 - 2.1.1. have held a degree of Bachelor of a relevant UNE Faculty for at least 10 years; *or*
 - 2.1.2. have held a degree of master of a relevant UNE Faculty or the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of the University for at least five years: *or*
 - 2.1.3. be a graduate of at least eight years' standing of another UNE Faculty or another university provided that the applicant has undertaken research within the University for not less than two years.
- 2.2. The application shall be made in writing to the Associate Dean (Research) in

¹ The following awards are classified as higher doctorate degrees for the purposes of this policy: in the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, the Doctor of Letters (DLitt); in the Faculty of Education, Health and Professional Studies, the Higher Doctorate of Education (HEdD); in the Faculty of Economics, Business and Law, the Doctor of Economics (DEc); and in the Faculty of the Sciences, the Doctor of Engineering (DE), Doctor of Resource Management (DResMgt), Doctor of Rural Science (DRurSc), and Doctor of Science (DSc).

the relevant UNE Faculty and shall include:

- 2.2.1. clear identification of the discipline(s) in the Faculty that the proposed dissertation will address;
 - 2.2.2. a statement of academic qualifications together with a list of his or her published works/creative accomplishments; and
 - 2.2.3. an outline of the work to be submitted for the degree.
- 2.3. Admission to candidature will not normally be accepted from an applicant who has already been awarded a higher doctorate of the University, or an equivalent qualification from another tertiary institution, unless the candidate can satisfy the Research and Research Training Committee in the relevant UNE Faculty that substantially new work is included in the dissertation and/or the applicant is applying on account of contributions to a branch of knowledge not included in the earlier higher doctorate.
- 2.4. Upon admission to candidature, the candidate shall pay the examination fee required by the University. The University shall determine this fee annually.

3. **The Dissertation**

- 3.1. Upon admission to candidature, the candidate shall submit a draft version or plan of their dissertation to the Research and Research Training Committee of the relevant UNE Faculty who will consult relevant sources of expertise, as needed, to ensure the dissertation will be in a form suitable for examination. The award will not normally be made for a body of work which has substantially been developed for the successful award of another degree.
- 3.2. Normally, the dissertation shall consist substantially of published works concerned with thematically- or conceptually-related aspects of a branch of learning within the relevant UNE Faculty, the majority of which shall have been published not less than six months before the date of application for candidature. However, it is recognised that the concept and form of what is to count as the dissertation may need to be individually negotiated between the Research and Research Training Committee in the relevant Faculty and the candidate.
- 3.3. Irrespective of the final negotiated form of the dissertation, the candidate must provide sufficient bridging material in the dissertation to make clear the thematic or conceptual threads connecting the published materials, creative or other works included in the dissertation.
- 3.3.1. The published works, creative or other materials may be accompanied by additional manuscript material, bridging and linking materials and other publications, creative or other works directly attributable to the candidate and which lie within the fields with which the relevant UNE Faculty is concerned.
 - 3.3.2. The dissertation shall include an extended abstract clearly setting out the nature and objectives of the works submitted, the overall contribution to knowledge that this body of work has contributed to the field and the extent to which the candidate considers he or she has achieved their objectives.

4. **Submission of Dissertation**

- 4.1. Once the suitability of the form of the dissertation has been confirmed, the candidate shall submit, to Research Services, five copies of a dissertation for examination.
- 4.2. The candidate shall indicate clearly and fully those parts, if any, of the publications that are not his or her own work. If conjoint work is submitted the candidate must produce satisfactory evidence as to the extent to which he or she was responsible for the initiation and conduct or direction of such conjoint work.
- 4.3. The candidate is required to indicate what part, if any, of the work has been previously submitted for a degree in this or any other university by him or herself, or in the case of conjoint work, by any of his or her collaborators.
- 4.4. Material that is subject to security or similar restrictions is not normally acceptable for examination.

5. **Examination**

- 5.1. Prior to the dissertation being examined, the Associate Dean (Research) of the relevant UNE Faculty will discuss a pool of possible examiners for the dissertation with the candidate as well as with other experts in the fields addressed in the dissertation.
- 5.2. The dissertation will be examined by three examiners, two of whom must be external to the University.
- 5.3. Any agreement resulting from the negotiations referred to in Rule 3.2. shall be communicated to the examiners together with the dissertation and other accompanying documentation and materials.
- 5.4. Each examiner will be given two months to produce a separate written report on the merits of the dissertation. Examiners shall not consult each other when producing their separate reports.
- 5.5. The Research Doctoral Committee, after reading examiners' reports, will make one of the following determinations:
 - 5.5.1. recommend to Academic Board the admission of the candidate to the degree; *or*
 - 5.5.2. advise the candidate to withdraw from their candidature.
- 5.6. Before making a decision in terms of Rule 5.5., the Research Doctoral Committee may request the examiners to consult and report to the Committee.
- 5.7. Except as provided in Rule 5.6., there shall be no re-examination of a dissertation submitted for a higher doctorate.
- 5.8. The candidate may appeal, on procedural grounds, the decision of Rule 5.5.(b) if rendered by the Research Doctoral Committee. Any appeal must be made in writing, directly to the Chair of Academic Board, and must clearly state the procedural grounds on which the appeal is based.
 - 5.8.1. The Standing Committee of Academic Board will consider the appeal. As part of the process, the candidate shall be invited to submit a report detailing any concerns they may have about the examination process.
 - 5.8.2. Standing Committee will make one of the following decisions at the conclusion of its deliberations:

5.8.2.1. recommend to Academic Board the admission of the candidate to the degree; *or*

5.8.2.2. advise the candidate to withdraw from their candidature.

There shall be no appeal against the final decision of the Standing Committee.

5.9. The University reserves the right to retain the material submitted for a higher doctorate by a successful candidate and reserves the right to publish the abstract in any manner approved by Council.

5.10. On approval of the award of the degree, one copy of the dissertation shall be deposited in the Dixon Library and one in the relevant UNE Faculty.

6. Procedures

6.1. Admission

6.1.1. On receipt of an application, the Research and Research Training Committee of the relevant UNE Faculty shall appoint two or more internal assessors to determine whether the candidate is acceptable for admission.

6.1.2. Upon receipt of reports from the internal assessors, the Research and Research Training Committee of the relevant UNE Faculty 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 Rule 2.1.(a) to (d), but such a recommendation requires a very strong supporting case to be put.

6.1.3. Upon admission to candidature, the Associate Dean (Research) shall notify the Chair of the Research Doctoral Committee of the admission and forward all details of the admission, including, where relevant, the supporting case for admission under exceptional circumstances, to Research Services.

6.1.3.1. For the Faculty of the Sciences, this notification will also clearly indicate the name of the higher doctorate degree for which the candidate will be considered.

6.1.3.2. From the time of this notification until the conclusion of the examination process, Research Services shall administer all aspects of the higher doctorate candidature.

6.1.3.3. Research Services shall advise the candidate of their successful admission, once the notification from the Faculty has been received.

6.2. Finalising the Dissertation

6.2.1. Upon receipt of the draft version or plan of the candidate's dissertation, the Research and Research Training Committee of the relevant UNE Faculty will consult relevant sources of expertise, as needed, to ensure the dissertation will be in a form suitable for examination.

6.2.2. The Associate Dean (Research) of the relevant UNE Faculty shall indicate to the candidate whether or not their dissertation will be suitable for examination.

6.2.3. If the proposed form is not suitable, the Associate Dean (Research) will advise the candidate with respect to changes needed to make the form

suitable.

- 6.2.4. If the form of the dissertation is deemed subject to negotiation with the candidate because of its proposed non-standard nature, the negotiation will be managed by the Associate Dean (Research) of the relevant UNE Faculty and will result in a written record of what has been agreed.²
- 6.2.5. The Associate Dean (Research) shall advise both the candidate and Research Services in writing to confirm that the dissertation will be in a suitable form and what that agreed form will be.
- 6.2.6. Research Services must receive copies of all correspondence between the candidate and the Associate Dean (Research).

6.3. Examination

- 6.3.1. Upon submission of the dissertation, Research Services shall advise the Associate Dean (Research) of the relevant UNE Faculty that the dissertation has been received.
- 6.3.2. The Associate Dean (Research) in conjunction with the Research and Research Training Committee of the relevant UNE Faculty shall, after suitable consultation with relevant UNE Faculty members and with the candidate:
 - 6.3.2.1. assemble and discuss a pool of potential examiners;
 - 6.3.2.2. advise Research Services of the contact details and suitability of four examiners for the dissertation selected from the pool.
 - 6.3.2.3. One examiner shall be clearly indicated as a reserve and will not be asked to participate in the examination unless conditions change with respect to one of the three active examiners.
 - 6.3.2.4. The examiner selection process shall ensure that at least two of the three active examiners are external to the University.
- 6.3.3. Each examiner shall be asked to submit a separate written report on the merits of the dissertation and will be reminded to provide his or her report within two months of receipt of the dissertation.
- 6.3.4. If an examiner fails to provide their report, after appropriate reminders, within a maximum of three months, the Research Doctoral Committee, after consultation with the relevant Associate Dean (Research), may notify the examiner that their services are no longer required and the reserve examiner may then be activated as a replacement.
- 6.3.5. Research Services shall coordinate the examination process and shall receive the reports from all examiners to place before the Research Doctoral Committee.
- 6.3.6. The Research Doctoral Committee will look for unanimity in recommendations from the examiners before recommending admission to the higher doctorate degree.

² For example, the dissertation might incorporate other forms and types of works such as musical compositions, software breakthroughs or performances recorded on various media. In the creative arts, a dissertation may be deemed to be an intervention in an established scholarly or artistic debate, dialogue or discourse. In this case, the dissertation should make explicit, either within the creative work itself or in supporting documentation, the work's relationship with that debate and communicate the ways in which the terms of the debate have been advanced by the work.

6.3.7. If the candidate appeals the decision of the Research Doctoral Committee in accordance with Rule 5.8., the Chair of Academic Board shall immediately refer the appeal and all associated materials to the Standing Committee of the Academic Board for review and final decision.

6.3.7.1. Standing Committee shall be empowered to gather any information it deems relevant to making a judgment regarding the validity of the appeal.

6.3.7.2. Matters of an academic nature will not be considered by the Standing Committee; it will rule only on the procedural appropriateness of the examination process.

6.3.7.3. Any member of the Standing Committee involved in the examination of the dissertation or in making the Research Doctoral Committee's determination that has been appealed will absent themselves from all discussions of the appeal.