

FACULTY OF SCIENCE

POSTGRADUATE STUDENT INFORMATION BOOKLET – 2017

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WELCOME

Message from the Dean

Dear Postgraduate Student,

Postgraduate students are the lifeblood of research in our Faculty, vital for research impetus and a prime source of new and interesting ideas. We are a university with an excellent reputation for the quality of our research, both nationally and internationally. As a Faculty, we are committed to conducting high level research and you, as one of our postgraduate students, play a pivotal role.



The aim of this booklet is to provide information on a range of important policies and procedures of direct relevance to you as a higher degree candidate. By registering with us for a higher degree you automatically enter into a “working relationship” with your academic supervisor(s) and colleagues. This means that your supervisor has a well-defined responsibility to provide you with the assistance you need to ensure that you are successful in your postgraduate study and research. At the same time, it is expected that you will commit yourself fully to your research programme. Successful research requires independent thought and your supervisor will encourage you to think independently but will guide you on your way. Doing a research degree is a challenging task and the critical thinking and oral and written communication skills that you will learn will strongly enhance your future career prospects.

I ask you to read this booklet carefully because it contains important information which, if not well understood may cause you much frustration. We are proud of the long tradition of outstanding research for which this Faculty is well known, and of the excellent Master’s and Doctoral graduates who began their careers as post-graduates in this Faculty. I wish you every success in your research and trust that you will thoroughly enjoy your experience and be able to look back on these years as among the most enjoyable, stimulating and productive of your life. We look forward to sharing the excitement of research with you.

Best wishes

Professor Anton le Roex

Dean, Faculty of Science

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Mr T Egbeyi

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www.science.uct.ac.za
www.uct.ac.za

Faculty Homepage:

UCT Homepage:

Admissions Office

<http://www.uct.ac.za/apply/applications/postgraduates/>

Tel. No. 021 650 2128

International Academics Programmes Office

<http://www.iapo.uct.ac.za/>

Tel. No. 021 650 2822

Student Fees Office

<http://www.uct.ac.za/students/postgraduates/fees/handbook/>

Tel. No. 021 650 1704

Student Housing Admission & Advocacy

<http://www.uct.ac.za/apply/residence/life/overview/>

Tel. No. 021 650 2977

Postgraduate Centre & Funding Office

<http://www.uct.ac.za/apply/funding/postgraduate/applications/>

Tel. No. 021 650 3622

Doctoral Degrees Office

<http://www.uct.ac.za/apply/candidates/applications/>

Tel. No. 021 650 2126

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INTRODUCTION

This booklet is an attempt to explain some of the administrative and academic issues related to the postgraduate experience. Your time and energy should be spent enjoying the excitement of your research, rather than wrestling with bureaucracy, and you are encouraged to take the time to read through these pages so that you are more aware of the processes that will affect your life as a postgraduate student.

Postgraduate education at UCT commonly results in one of two outputs: a Doctor of Philosophy degree (PhD) or a Master's degree (MSc/MPhil). Master's degrees in the Science Faculty may be obtained in one of two ways; (i) by a research dissertation; (ii) by coursework and a minor research dissertation/research project.

Note that this handbook is intended to serve as a guide to postgraduate students. Whilst it draws on other published University documents and Handbooks, it does not replace them. The rules for the various higher degrees are set out in the [Handbook of General Rules & Policies](#) (Handbook 3 in the UCT series) and the [Faculty of Science Student Handbook](#) (Handbook 11 in the UCT series).

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A MASTER'S AND A DOCTORAL DEGREE?

The most basic difference between a Master's degree and a PhD (Doctoral of Philosophy) is that the PhD is the higher degree: it requires more effort, time and original research. However, in practice the difference is more subtle than this. By convention a Master's degree is normally awarded following the successful examination of a dissertation, which means a discourse or discussion. A PhD is awarded on the basis of a thesis (an assertion or tenet that has to be proved against critical argument). In practice, however, the two terms are commonly used interchangeably.

A Master's degree is frequently a student's first encounter with real research. Its primary function is training in research. It is a clearly circumscribed piece of work that the supervisor feels confident can be undertaken within, or close to, the minimum time period. The skills imparted, and which the candidate hones through the process, include posing a research question, undertaking a relevant literature review, engaging rigorously with research methods, drawing valid conclusions and communicating findings in a clear, logical and scholarly way. Importantly, the work does not have to contain original findings - it must simply demonstrate a mastery of the methods of research.

The degree of Doctor of Philosophy, on the other hand, demands that the candidate is able to conduct independent research on his/her own initiative. Through the thesis the candidate must be able to demonstrate in his/her thesis that he/she is at the academic forefront in the topic selected, that the work is original and that it advances knowledge.

MASTER'S DEGREES IN SCIENCE

A candidate entering a Master's degree must generally have a BSc(Honours) degree or four-year undergraduate equivalent (i.e. a four-year degree post NSC equivalent, which includes a research project). Departments in the Science Faculty offer three types of Master's degrees; the differences are summarised below:

- Master of Science (by dissertation): This is a research-based degree in which a dissertation on a selected research topic is completed under the guidance of a supervisor. The majority of students in the Science Faculty complete their Master's degree in this manner.
- Master of Science (by coursework and minor dissertation): In this degree a candidate completes 50% of the requirement through coursework, and 50% by way of a minor dissertation on a piece of supervised research. The dissertation is by definition smaller in scope than one completed where the dissertation counts for the full degree.
- Master of Philosophy (MPhil): This is either a research degree, or a degree obtained by coursework and minor dissertation, for candidates engaged in cross-faculty research dissertations or where a candidate comes from a non-science academic background.

A detailed listing of the fields in which higher degrees are offered in the Faculty is set out in the Faculty Handbook.

DOCTORAL DEGREES IN SCIENCE

There are two types of doctoral degrees offered in Science – a PhD (Doctor of Philosophy) and DSc (Doctor of Science). The former is obtained via research submitted as a thesis and is in practice the most common mechanism for obtaining a Doctoral degree. The DSc degree has very rarely been awarded at UCT, and is normally based on a career of high quality publications focused on a particular topic; in this regard it is more relevant to senior researchers late in their careers. The entrance requirement for the PhD is a Master's degree, but it is sometimes possible to upgrade to a PhD after completing the first year of Master's research (see page 11 for details).

ACADEMIC LOCATION OF THE DEGREES

The PhD is a University degree (the award of the degree is the responsibility of the Doctoral Degrees Board (DDB)), but students are usually academically located in the department of the principal supervisor.

Master's degrees are awarded by the Science Faculty, and are discipline-specific and students are located within the appropriate department. If a coursework Master's student is registered in the Faculty of Science but pursues the dissertation component with a supervisor in another Faculty then they must register their dissertation in the Faculty of the main supervisor. The dissertation will be examined through the supervisor's Faculty and the outcome, including whether the dissertation is awarded a distinction, will be decided by the relevant Master's degree committee in that Faculty. The student will nevertheless still graduate within the Science Faculty and the rules for the awarding of the degree with distinction will be subject to those detailed within this booklet.

STUDENT FUNDING

The Postgraduate Centre & Funding Office (located on the Upper Level, Otto Beit Building, University Avenue North), is an important source of information and advice about potential funding sources and the procedures necessary to access these. Contact the Postgraduate Funding Office with any queries regarding:

- Funding your postgraduate studies.
- Applying for conference and overseas travel grants.
- Information on the NRF and the NRF online application process.
- Delays in payment of your funding.
- Information on the Postgraduate Centre and Seminar Room bookings and for general help and information.

Students are encouraged to apply for financial support to a full range of potential sources early in their final year of undergraduate study, or in the year before they wish to initiate their postgraduate studies. For further information please visit the website: <http://www.uct.ac.za/apply/funding/postgraduate/application>

APPLYING FOR ADMISSION

Application procedure

The Faculty will consider an application to register for a Master's or PhD degree from anyone who meets the academic entrance requirements. For a Master's degree this is an Honours degree or equivalent. An Honours degree is a post-Bachelor degree qualification. A four-year Bachelor's degree that is considered equivalent to a South African Honours degree may be accepted provided they have completed a research project. Entrance requirement for registration as a PhD student is a Master's degree or equivalent.

International students may require certification of their degree equivalence by the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA). Contact the Postgraduate Administrator in the Faculty Office for the address. The Faculty reserves the right to make a final judgement on the South African equivalence of a foreign degree and uses the NARIC system to determine degree equivalence globally.

Applications for coursework Master's degrees are usually limited and applicants are accepted on a competitive basis. Students interested in applying for admission should first consult the department concerned to determine closing dates for applications, and what documentation is required.

Prospective candidates wishing to register for a PhD or a Master's by dissertation should have a discussion with the prospective supervisor prior to applying formally to the University. A formal application will have to be submitted online at <http://www.uct.ac.za/apply/applications/forms/>

You will generally have to provide the following information:

- A *curriculum vitae* which includes your personal details, your academic history and any work experience.
- An official transcript of your university results (non-UCT students only).
- The name(s) of UCT staff members who have agreed to serve as your supervisor/s.
- For students that have not already engaged but have been provisionally accepted by a prospective supervisor (subject to Departmental and Faculty approval) then their application should include a brief outline of the area of interest for research towards your Master's or PhD degree. This letter together with the rest of your application will be circulated within the potential host department and supervisors may choose to contact you or not.
- Proof that you meet the minimum English language requirement for admission.

Advice on application procedures can be obtained from the Postgraduate Administrator in the Science Faculty Office.

Do not arrive at UCT until you have been formally notified by the Faculty of Science that you have been accepted for postgraduate study.

English Language Proficiency

International students: students from non-English speaking backgrounds are required to provide proof of English proficiency and may be required to take a test.

Supervision of the dissertation/thesis

Except in exceptional circumstances, the principal supervisor must be a full-time permanent member of the academic staff of the Faculty. Co-supervision by persons within or outside the University is possible, but a person employed outside of the University may not act as a principal supervisor. An adjunct staff member may act as principal supervisor on motivation by the Head of Department and Faculty, subject to the approval of the Deputy Vice Chancellor for Research. The respective roles of the supervisors (e.g., project inception, funding, skills proffered) should be detailed within the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

The choice of supervisor must be approved by the HoD. It is important that the HoD is satisfied that the proposed supervisor has adequate knowledge, time and resources to supervise the proposed research. In the case of Doctoral candidates, the DDB is also responsible for the adequacy of the supervisor. Academic staff who do not have a PhD, will not normally supervise PhD degrees. In rare cases, people who are experts in their fields and have prior supervisory experience, but who do not have a PhD, are approved by the DDB to be the primary supervisor of a PhD thesis.

In the case of a student currently registered at UCT, the process of finding a supervisor which is outlined above will normally take place during the year prior to embarking on further postgraduate study.

Selecting a research topic

The selection of a topic for research for a Master's or PhD may occur in two ways. Either the topic of research is identified by the prospective student, or a supervisor might provide a number of possible projects from which the student can choose; either way the supervisor and student need to agree on the selected research topic. The suitability of a research topic depends not only on its intrinsic academic merit, but also on funding realities. It is, however, the responsibility of the candidate to make the final selection, and it is wise to choose a topic of strong interest rather than one offering better funding.

REGISTRATION

First registration

Research Master's and PhD students

There is no specific date for first registration of newly entering postgraduate students who are registering for a PhD or Master's degree (by dissertation only) - commencement is by mutual arrangement with the supervisor. However, Master's and PhD students who need to have the year of first registration counted as an academic year for their minimum period of registration (1 year for a Master's, 2 years for a PhD) must have been registered for the degree concerned by 30 April. Registration follows formal acceptance by the Faculty for admission and involves the completion of 3 forms – a registration form, a curriculum form and a *Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)*. Registration forms with instructions are available on the web at <http://www.science.uct.ac.za/sci/postgrad/current/registration>. Registration at any time in the second semester incurs 50% fees. For detailed information on fees see <http://www.uct.ac.za/students/postgraduates/fees/handbook/>

Master's registration requires a short proposal (1-3 pages) to accompany the MoU and subject to approval by the HoD and Deputy Dean outlining *inter alia*:

- the topic to be investigated;
- familiarity with the central literature within the broad field of study; and
- clarity on the research methods.

PhD registration requires a short written research proposal (at least 3 pages), outlining the scope and intentions of the research that must accompany the registration forms. Both Masters and PhD MoU's are subject to approval by the Deputy Dean on behalf of the Faculty. Final responsibility for registration and acceptance of a PhD student lies with the DDB. New PhD students will generally be required to develop a full research proposal during the first six months of their registration, and this may be a stated condition in the MoU. Failure to produce a satisfactory proposal within the allotted time frame may lead to termination of registration at the end of the first year of registration. Acceptance of the full PhD proposal may involve the candidate presenting a seminar, based on a written research proposal, to departmental staff, other postgraduate students and others with specialist knowledge in the field of study, which demonstrates, *inter alia*, that:

- The candidate is familiar with the main literature in the field.
- There is sufficient scope in the topic for a PhD and there is a clear definition of the hypothesis proposed.
- The candidate has the ability to undertake the work.
- The potential contribution to knowledge has been identified and there is a clear definition of the key questions to be addressed in the context of the proposed hypothesis.
- The method of research is sound and achievable and there is a clear knowledge of the experimental procedures to be used, and both the methods and analyses to be pursued in producing the results.

Master's by coursework and minor dissertation

Students registering for Master's by coursework and minor dissertation need to do so by the first day of lectures. Normally a specific day is set aside (consult with the department concerned in this regard) to complete registration procedures which involve completing a registration and curriculum form. When registering for the minor dissertation component (as a separate course code), later in the year, an MoU will also need to be completed with your supervisor. Registration must be completed by the deadline or students will be subject to a fee penalty.

International students

All international students are required to go through a clearance/pre-registration process with the International Academic Programmes Office (IAPO) BEFORE Faculty registration. International students cannot register with their Faculties without clearance from IAPO. For pre-registration, you need to produce your passport with your valid UCT study permit, proof of medical insurance/aid and proof of payment of your fees. The student will be provided with an “International Students Pre-Registration” form from IAPO. This document must be submitted along with the registration forms to the Postgraduate Officer – Faculty of Science. The registrations of international students will not be approved without these documents, nor will they be approved unless the necessary fee payments have been made. Any queries should be directed to IAPO at 021 650 2822 or int-iaopo@uct.ac.za.

In addition to standard tuition fees, all non-SADC international students are required to pay a non-refundable service administration fee. Students enrolling for Master’s degrees by coursework and minor dissertation, are also charged an International Term Fee (ITF). The Faculty offers a Faculty International Student Bursaries (FISB) to deserving international Master’s students registering for the degree by coursework and minor dissertation. Further details and application forms are available from the supervisor or the Postgraduate Administrator in the Faculty Office.

Renewal of registration

Each candidate is responsible for maintaining continuous registration. Registration and *Progress & Planned Activity (P&PA)* forms for returning candidates, with instructions, are available on the web at <http://www.science.uct.ac.za/sci/postgrad/current/registration>. See Fees Booklet for deadlines for registration for returning students, a penalty fee is charged for late registration.

In November, each student’s progress will be considered against the objectives agreed to in the MoU or P&PA form. Each supervisor is required to comment on the progress of their students and if the progress meets the work plan outlined in the MoU or P&PA then the student will be coded CONT (academically eligible to continue) and may proceed to register for the following year. The process for students whose progress is deemed to be unsatisfactory is explained in detail below (see page 14).

Change of registration

Upgrading to a PhD/Downgrading to a Master’s

It is possible to change the status of registration during the process of study. Thus, it is possible for a Master’s degree to be upgraded to a PhD if the supervisor believes that the student has made good progress, has shown suitable potential and that there is scope within the project to lead to a higher qualification. This would normally occur at the start of the second year of Master’s registration, and at the latest must occur by the end of the second year of Master’s registration. It is not possible to backdate PhD registration to the first year. It is also not possible to use the work of the Master’s degree towards a PhD after the examination process. Similarly, it is possible to downgrade from a PhD to a Master’s degree, but this must occur before examination. It is not possible for a Master’s degree to result from a failed PhD.

The documents to be submitted to the Faculty Office (in order to process an upgrade from Master’s to PhD) include a letter of motivation signed by the supervisor(s) and HoD, a PhD research proposal, and a formal application submitted online at <http://www.uct.ac.za/apply/applications/postgraduates/>.

The documents to be submitted to the Faculty Office (in order to process a downgrade from PhD to Master's) include a letter signed by the student requesting a downgrade, together with a motivation from the supervisor(s) and HoD and a formal application submitted online at <http://www.uct.ac.za/apply/applications/postgraduates/>.

Leave of Absence or Cancellation/Discontinuation of studies

Leave of Absence (LoA)

If it is impossible for a candidate to continue with his/her studies/research in any given year (for example due to serious illness, maternity leave or on compassionate grounds) but if he/she intends continuing in the following year then he/she must apply for leave of absence (LoA), in writing, to the Dean. LoA can be awarded for a full year, the first six months or the second six months of the year. At PhD level a maximum of one year LoA is allowed by the DDB. The request for LoA must include the *Application for Leave of Absence* form and must state the period, the reasons and include supporting documentation (e.g. medical certificate), and have the signed support of the supervisor and HoD.

Cancellation/Discontinuation of studies

If a candidate will be discontinuing studies then he/she must formally cancel registration in writing on the prescribed form. The cancellation form is obtainable from <http://www.uct.ac.za/apply/fees/faq/cancellation/>. Applications for retrospective cancellation of registration are not accepted: there are specified dates after which no fees will be refunded (see Fees Booklet).

SUPERVISION

Supervisor(s)

All students registering for a degree by dissertation will be formally allocated a supervisor, who is responsible for giving guidance. Co-supervision by people from within or outside of the University is possible, but the principal supervisor should be a full-time academic member of staff within the department in which the student is registered and must always be a UCT employee. Emeritus Professors may continue as principal supervisors of students who were registered under them before their retirement. However, both Emeritus Professors and Honorary Research Associates may only act as co-supervisors, (not as principal supervisor) with newly registering Master's and PhD students. An adjunct staff member may act as principal supervisor on motivation by the Head of Department and Faculty, subject to the approval of the Deputy Vice Chancellor for Research. The respective roles and contributions to a postgraduate research project can be detailed within the MoU acknowledging where appropriate the person(s) responsible for the inception of the project, funding, skills and particular duties to fulfil during the course of the project. The approval of supervisors is the responsibility of the HoD, even though a student may have approached an individual staff member, or *vice versa*. The HoD must be satisfied that the supervisor has the necessary expertise, knowledge, skills and resources, time and funding to supervise the research. If the HoD is not satisfied that the experience/expertise of the supervisor is sufficient, or that they are overcommitted, he/she may insist on a co-supervisor being appointed. Typically a UCT supervisor will be permitted to supervise a maximum of six postgraduate students (Master's and PhD level combined) doing full time research dissertations.

Generally, members of staff should have a PhD in order to supervise both PhD and Master's students, but this does not necessarily exclude a member of staff without a PhD from supervising a PhD or Master's. Without exception, any member of staff without a PhD seeking to be the primary supervisor of a PhD candidate will require formal approval by the DDB. The application to the DDB should be brought by the HoD, via the Dean, motivating the case. In the case of applicants with a track record of successful co-supervision, this accreditation will not normally be withheld.

Memorandum of Understanding between Postgraduate Student and Supervisor(s)

For Master's and PhD registration, the Faculty has introduced an MoU to be signed in the first year of registration by both supervisor and candidate, clarifying issues relating to respective roles and responsibilities, frequency of access to supervisor, sabbatical leave planned by supervisor, timing of annual leave by supervisor and student, expected working hours for student, timeframes, funding (if appropriate) and intellectual property. It is essential that students and supervisors apply their minds carefully to proposed timelines and skills, equipment and resources required to achieve the goals stated in the research proposal. A copy of the MoU form is available at <http://www.science.uct.ac.za/sci/postgrad/current/registration>. *The MoU is an important 'contract' between candidate and supervisor(s) and needs to be taken seriously, and filled out in as much detail as possible.*

Before the start of the second and subsequent years of registration, a P&PA form (<http://www.science.uct.ac.za/sci/postgrad/current/registration>) needs to be completed and signed by both the candidate and supervisor(s). This process represents an annual review of progress and should be seen as an extension to the initial MoU. If in the opinion of the supervisor, adequate progress is not being made, the P&PA form should clearly lay down criteria (such as submission dates and milestones) against which further progress shall be measured. In November of each year, each student's progress will be assessed according to the criteria laid down in the MoU or P&PA form. If progress is deemed to be unsatisfactory, a candidate may be refused permission to reregister in the following year.

Roles and responsibilities of student and supervisor(s)

Responsibility of the student

- To acknowledge and accept primary responsibility for his/her education.
- To demonstrate a good work ethic.
- To strive to meet the expected throughput rate (18 months for a Master's by dissertation student, 3 years for a PhD student).
- To share ideas and to work collegially.
- To participate in and to contribute to the life of the department, including being available to demonstrate at undergraduate practicals/tutorials.
- To commit to co-publication with the supervisor(s).
- To familiarise her/himself with the University rules, particularly with regard to plagiarism, and to commit to respecting those rules.

Responsibility of the supervisor(s) include

- Giving guidance about the nature of research and the standard expected, about the planning of the research programme, about literature and sources, attendance at taught classes, about requisite techniques (including arranging for instruction where necessary), and about the problem of plagiarism.
- Maintaining contact through regular tutorial and seminar meetings, in accordance with the faculty/departmental policy and in the light of discussion of arrangements with the student.
- Being accessible to the student at appropriate times when he/she may need advice.
- Giving detailed advice on the necessary completion dates of successive stages of the work so that the whole may be submitted within a scheduled time.
- Requesting written work, as appropriate, and returning such work with constructive criticism, in reasonable time.
- Arranging, as appropriate, for the student to talk about his/her work to staff or graduate seminars, and to have practice in oral presentations.

- Ensuring that the student is made aware of inadequate progress or of standards of work below that generally expected.
- Ensuring that the candidate is (or becomes) familiar with, and observes, one of the internationally recognised guides to scholarly conventions on presentation, documentation of sources and the like. In particular, the candidate must:
 - adopt and use a standard convention for citation and referencing;
 - attribute, cite and reference all significant contributions to, and quotations used in, the thesis;
 - be aware of the consequences of any attempt to pass on work of others as his or her own, or other forms of plagiarism, namely an end to any prospect of scholarly career, a failure, and disciplinary measure.

Appeals

The relationship between supervisor(s) and postgraduate student is an important one: if it is unsatisfactory it can significantly and negatively impact on the educational experience. If serious problems develop in this relationship, the student should:

- Raise the matter with the supervisor(s) and seek to resolve the matter personally.
- If this does not resolve the matter, the problem should be referred to the HoD.
- If the supervisor is the Head, it should be referred directly to the Deputy Dean charged with handling Postgraduate Affairs.
- If the supervisor is the Dean or a Deputy Dean, the matter should be referred to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor with the research portfolio.

In the event that the above preferred route is not easily followed, the Chair of the Postgraduate Students' Council should be approached for advice.

Supervision and attendance at the University

During the period of registration, a higher degree candidate will be expected to be available on campus for discussion with his/her supervisor(s). For persons who are based outside Cape Town there is generally an expectation that the candidate will spend some period of time on campus interacting with the supervisor(s); the expected time spent on campus varies with department and needs to be clarified with the supervisor(s) and HoD concerned. In any event, a candidate must be prepared to make him/herself available for discussion at the University if required.

UNSATISFACTORY PROGRESS

In November of each year supervisors are required to provide the Faculty Examinations Committee (FEC) with a statement as to the progress (satisfactory or unsatisfactory) of their Master's and PhD students. In this context progress is relative to the stated objectives within the MoU or P&PA and takes into consideration factors that may have impeded progress that are not within the control of either the student or supervisor. In all cases where progress is considered to be unsatisfactory, despite mitigating factors, the student will be given a chance to respond and appeal against the supervisor's statement. The FEC will deliberate on the report submitted by the supervisor together with the response from the student, as well as the MoU or P&PA.

If the appeal is upheld, the student will be allowed to re-register and will be assigned a progress of 'FEC concession to continue' (FECC). A new P&PA form will be required to be completed with the supervisor, before registration, in which the objectives for the following year are clearly stipulated.

If the student's 'unsatisfactory' progress is upheld by the FEC, the student will be coded 'academically

ineligible to continue' (RENN) and may not re-register. Appeals against this decision can be submitted to the DVC via the Deputy Registrar (karen.vanheerden@uct.ac.za) by research students, or to the Faculty Readmission Appeals Committee (RAC) by students registered for the coursework component of a Master's degree.

The student may decide not to continue with their studies in which case he/she must complete a 'Cancellation of Registration' form and submit it to the Faculty office for processing.

In select circumstances, the FEC may award a probation period to a student until re-registration commences. The student will be assigned a progress of 'status pending final FEC decision' (FECF). The student will be informed of this decision in writing and will be required to immediately meet with their supervisor(s) and prepare a new P&PA form within a specified period. Here the student and supervisor must devise a new work schedule for the stated period during which clear objectives must be agreed upon for a reassessment of progress. At the end of this probation period the supervisor will again be required to provide the FEC with a statement as to the progress (satisfactory or unsatisfactory) of the student. Should the progress during this "pending" period be satisfactory, the student will be assigned the progress of FECC and will be allowed to register for that year. If progress is again considered to be unsatisfactory and the FEC supports this decision then the student will be coded RENN and will not be permitted to register. Students have the right to appeal this decision if there are relevant extenuating circumstances that might have impeded progress. Appeals against this decision can be submitted to the DVC via the Deputy Registrar (karen.vanheerden@uct.ac.za) by research students, or to the Faculty Readmission Appeals Committee (RAC) by students registered for the coursework component of a Master's degree.

ETHICS

The issues of ethics and intellectual honesty are vital to university life. The Faculty takes the issue of ethics in research very seriously and to this end has established a Research Ethics Committee which considers the following:

- All ethical matters related to research in the Faculty including, but not exclusively, conflicts of interest, authorship, the relationships between junior and senior research workers, and the role of the scientist in society.
- Any ethical issues brought to the attention of the Committee by researchers in the Faculty.
- To screen and approve, or otherwise, all research proposals in the Faculty that relate to human or animal subjects; this includes proposed research involving students or staff, by UCT researchers or by outside visiting researchers.
- To be aware that research questionnaires involving human subjects have ethical dimensions, and that research involving staff or student perceptions of race, identity or ethnicity also have ethical dimensions.
- To report to the Senate Ethics in Research Committee and, in addition, report all instances of unethical or improper research practice to the Dean for referral to the Chair of the University Research Committee.

At the time of first registration, the supervisor(s) will have had to sign a statement in the MoU relating to the need for any ethical clearance required for a student's research.

A particular (and unfortunately growing) ethical issue is that of plagiarism. Plagiarism, in essence, is passing off someone else's work as your own: it results from inadequately acknowledging sources of data, analyses and ideas, and includes direct copying of passages of text. It is dishonest and it has no place at a university. If students are in any doubt on issues relating to plagiarism, they must consult their supervisor(s) or the Ethics

Committee. Instances of plagiarism will be taken to the University Court and may have very serious consequences, including rustication or even expulsion. Please see *Avoiding Plagiarism: A guide for students* and *A checklist to help you avoid plagiarism in your work* attached to this booklet as APPENDIX A, for more detailed information in plagiarism.

All Master's candidates, at the time of submission, are required to submit a declaration, which should be included in the dissertation, stating: 'I know the meaning of plagiarism and declare that all of the work in the dissertation, save for that which is properly acknowledged, is my own'.

The PhD declaration is discussed in the next section.

If in any doubt regarding ethical issues relating to research, seek advice from your supervisor(s) or HoD.

SUBMISSION OF A DISSERTATION/THESIS

Timing and process of submission

At the conclusion of research, the candidate must submit a dissertation or thesis for examination. This normally occurs after receiving an indication from the supervisor(s) that the product is in a form which is acceptable for submission. However, a candidate is not prevented from submitting without the supervisor's approval.

If a candidate intends submitting a Master's dissertation for examination he/she must inform the HoD in writing, with a copy to the Dean, of such an intention two weeks in advance of the planned submission date. The supervisor(s), will then nominate suitable examiners for approval by the HoD and the Deputy Dean/Dean. If submitting a PhD thesis, the candidate must inform the Doctoral Degrees Board Officer (Masingene Building) in writing of such intention one month prior to the planned submission.

The dates for submission of dissertations and theses are:

- **13 March 2017** for persons hoping to graduate in July 2017.
- **15 August 2017** for persons hoping to graduate in December 2017.

Students who do not submit by 13 March 2017 will be required to re-register before submitting. Where a student who submitted prior to the start of term is required to revise and resubmit a dissertation/thesis, they must register and pay the academic fee for that year. If the examination result is not available prior to June graduation, the student will be registered by the Faculty for that academic year but does not have to pay fees. Please note that while the student must pay the full fees when re-registering for a revision of their dissertation/thesis, that they will be reimbursed a portion of their fees provided they complete their revisions timeously (e.g. within a quarter or semester).

Please refer to the University Fees Booklet for submission dates with respect to fee rebates.

Format

Students must submit for examination a digital copy in the format specified. Students may be required to submit up to two copies of the dissertation in temporary binding in the event that an examiner requests a hard copy of the dissertation. Where a hard copy is required, formatting is at the candidate's discretion, but using A4 paper is the expected norm. Reasonable width margins (2 - 2.5 cm) are desirable to ensure that binding does not impede reading of the text. However, candidates should consult their supervisor(s) early on in the process. The contents must be printed in either double or one and a half spacing using a common font

throughout. Printing on both sides of the page is encouraged, but a reasonable weight paper must then be used. Once the thesis has been finally accepted, submit to the Faculty Office a digital copy of the final corrected version of the thesis in the format specified for the Library.

A candidate who contemplates including published papers in his/her dissertation/thesis must accept that approval to do so is not automatic. Refer to the *Guidelines for the inclusion of publications in the PhD thesis*, available from the DDB or Faculty Office, for further information. If a candidate contemplates doing this, he/she must note this in his/her MoU with his/her supervisor each year. In addition the candidate and supervisor are advised to seek the advice of the Faculty's Higher Degrees Committee about his/her plan to do so at an early stage. While the faculty committee will not be able to give a binding answer in the case of PhD candidates, it will be able to indicate to the candidate and his/her supervisor whether:

- It is likely to support the proposal. Where published papers are included, the thesis must nonetheless show acceptable academic style, scholarly content and coherence as a connected account with a satisfactory introduction, statement of thesis and conclusion.
- It is unlikely to support submission according to the plan outlined. A binding decision can only be given by the DDB for PhD candidates. It is accepted that this may not be possible until sometime into the work.

A request to include publications in a PhD thesis should generally include the following:

1. Title of thesis
2. A brief overview of the thesis structure (it must include a general introduction and a discussion chapter that pulls the various chapters in the thesis together).
3. A list of publications that will be included as self-standing chapters, with the authors, title and journal information, together with a comment on the student's contribution to each article.
4. Declaration from each co-author and supervisor(s) that they agree that the article may be included in the thesis, and what their individual contributions were.
5. Declaration from any student co-author that the work won't be used for their higher degree purposes.

For a Master's degree a candidate must submit for examination a digital copy in the format specified, plus upon request, up to two copies of the dissertation in temporary binding for submission to examiners; to the Postgraduate Officer in the Science Faculty Office. Once the dissertation has been finally accepted, submit to the Faculty Office a digital copy of the final corrected version of the dissertation in the format specified for the Library.

For a PhD a candidate must submit for examination a digital copy in the format specified, plus upon request, up to three copies of the thesis in temporary binding for submission to examiners; to the Doctoral Degrees Board Officer. Once the thesis has been finally accepted, submit to the Doctoral Degrees Board Office a digital copy of the final corrected version of the thesis in the format specified for the Library.

Length

In the case of a PhD, the thesis may not exceed 80,000 words. If it is felt that it is essential to exceed this length, special permission must be obtained from the Dean. It is the expectation that a Master's degree by dissertation only should be substantially shorter than this; on the order of 35,000 words (~80-100 pages) would be the expected norm. Minor dissertations completed as part of a coursework Masters should be shorter than full dissertations; on the order of 50 pages or 17, 000 words.

Title page

There must be a title page on which should appear the dissertation/thesis title, name of candidate (plus qualifications if you wish), name of the supervisor and co-supervisor(s), name of department, University and the month and year of submission. The following is the recommended wording used after the thesis title and name of the candidate:

Dissertation (or Thesis) presented for the degree of Master of Science
(or Doctor of Philosophy) in the Department of ... University of Cape
Town Month and Year Supervisor(s)

For a Master's by coursework and minor dissertation the wording should read 'Minor Dissertation presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of...'

Plagiarism declaration

Following the title page there should be a page containing the following signed statement by the candidate:

'I know the meaning of plagiarism and declare that all of the work in the dissertation (or thesis), save for that which is properly acknowledged, is my own'.

Publication

When presenting a thesis a candidate shall be deemed by so doing to grant free licence to the University to publish it in whole or in part in any format that the University deems fit. No publication may, without the prior permission of Senate, contain a statement that the published material was or is to be submitted in part or in full for the degree.

Declaration of free licence

In the case of PhD students, the candidate is required to sign a declaration stating:

'I hereby:

- a) grant the University free license to reproduce the above thesis in whole or in part, for the purpose of research;
- b) declare that:
 - I. the above thesis is my own unaided work, both in conception and execution, and that apart from the normal guidance from my supervisor(s), I have received no assistance except as stated below;
 - II. neither the substance nor any part of the thesis has been submitted in the past, or is being, or is to be submitted for a degree at this University or at any other University, except as stated below.

I am now presenting the thesis for examination for the Degree of PhD.'

Referencing

Forms of referencing must be standard for the discipline and must adhere to a recognised international convention, agreed with the supervisor(s).

EXAMINATION

Overview

The system of independent external examination lies at the heart of credible quality assurance. The examination of Master's dissertations involves two examiners (at least one of whom must be at an institution of high academic standing outside of South Africa). The examiners are selected on the basis of their knowledge in the field within which the research is located. Appointments of examiners of Master's dissertations are subject to approval by the Dean.

At the Doctoral level, the thesis is examined by three external experts in the field, at least two of whom are based at an institution of high academic standing outside of South Africa. Appointments of examiners of PhD theses are subject to the approval by the DDB.

In all cases, the identity of the examiners is kept strictly confidential from the student. This confidentiality remains in force until the examiners give permission for their identities to be known after the examination process has run its full course (note that the examiners have the right not to give this permission). Supervisors are not permitted to make contact with examiners during the examination process. No dissertation or thesis will be examined under conditions of secrecy, though it is possible to apply for *temporary* confidentiality of a dissertation or thesis under examination where there is good reason for a short delay in making the research public (see secrecy conditions on page 20).

What is expected of a Master's dissertation?

In order for the degree to be awarded, a Master's dissertation must indicate that a candidate has successfully completed a programme of training in research in that he/she:

- understands the nature, objectives and scientific principles underlying the investigation;
- is adequately acquainted with the relevant literature;
- has mastered appropriate techniques and analytical methods;
- assesses the significance of findings in a thorough and logically-coherent manner;
- shows evidence of critical and independent thought; and
- reports on the study in an acceptable scientific format (in accordance with Faculty rules and norms) that is satisfactory in both presentation and literary style.

A Master's degree is essentially a training course to equip a candidate with skills necessary either for employment in a given field, or for further independent research. Consequently, the dissertation need not involve original research, distinctly advance knowledge of the subject or be potentially publishable in a peer-reviewed scientific journal.

Awarding a Master's with distinction:

Master's degrees are awarded with distinction in exceptional cases only. Usually a unanimous decision from both examiners is required, but a distinction may be awarded by the Master's Degree Committee if one examiner recommends this and the other examiner does not object and their comments are both very positive and criticisms relatively minor.

To recommend that the degree be awarded with distinction, the examiner should be of the opinion that the work is outstanding at the Master's level, bearing in mind the time available to the candidate (usually between twelve months and two years), the methodological complexities involved, and the intellectual difficulty of the particular subject matter. As a guideline, examiners might consider a dissertation to be worthy of a distinction if it fulfils most of the following criteria:

- The standard is in the top 20%, approximately, of the Master's dissertations that they have examined.
- The structure and layout of the dissertation is excellent.
- The presentation is excellent. Some minor editorial errors (such as formatting, grammatical or spelling mistakes) may be tolerated and referred back to the candidate for correction. Ubiquitous and careless errors in presentation that point to a lack of exactitude should militate against the award of a distinction.

Assessment of examiners' reports

Examiners of Master's dissertations and PhD theses are asked to recommend one of the following outcomes:

- (A) That the dissertation/thesis be passed without the need for corrections and the degree be awarded.
- (B) That the dissertation/thesis be passed and the degree be awarded only after specified changes have been made to the text of the dissertation.
- (C) That the dissertation/thesis is unsatisfactory and should be substantially revised and resubmitted for examination.
- (D) That the dissertation/thesis be rejected, and the degree not be awarded

Distinctions are not awarded to PhD theses.

In the case of Master's degrees, the examiners' reports are submitted to the HoD who writes a consolidated report, taking all examiners' comments into account. He/she makes a recommendation to the Dean on the outcome of the examination process in terms of the categories and whether a distinction should be awarded or not. The Dean will then make the final decision on the outcome.

In the case of Doctoral degrees, the reports are received by a Committee of Assessors, chaired by the Dean, who evaluate the reports and make a recommendation (categories A, B, C, or D – see above) to the Doctoral Degrees Board who makes the final decision.

In the case of the Master's degree by coursework and minor dissertation, a candidate must obtain a distinction in each of the coursework and dissertation components, in order to be awarded the degree with distinction. Likewise both components must be separately passed to achieve an overall pass.

After a decision is reached, the Faculty Office (Master's) or DDB (PhD) sends a letter to the candidate, the HoD and the supervisor(s) informing them of the outcome.

Where improvements and corrections are required, the student must consult with the supervisor(s) for advice on what needs to be done. It is the responsibility of the supervisor(s) to oversee the corrections which will be subject to approval by the HoD and, in the case of Master's dissertations, the Dean or Dean's nominee. The Chair of the DDB is responsible for approving corrections in the case of PhD candidates. Such corrections should

be completed within six months (Master's) or one year (PhD) of notification. *It is important to note that in the event of a C result, the candidate has only one chance of resubmission, i.e. option C is not available in the re-examination.*

Once a decision is taken to award the degree, a copy of the dissertation/thesis is lodged with the library's digital repository.

ISSUES RELATING TO INTELLECTUAL OWNERSHIP

Secrecy conditions

The principle that all research results should be freely available governs all research conducted at the University of Cape Town. Therefore, no-one will be allowed to undertake research, if the results of which may not be published. However, on rare occasions there may be a good reason for a short delay in making a thesis or dissertation available to anyone other than the supervisors and examiners. The University of Cape Town will consider giving such a dispensation on application to the Doctoral Degrees Board in the case of the PhD or Faculty in the case of a Master's. Good cause must be shown for the suppression of a thesis. The suppression period, which starts at graduation (confer date), may range from a minimum of six months to a period not exceeding three years.

The Doctoral Degrees Board (DDB) or Faculty will consider each application (either at a meeting or by Chair's Circular) and will make a determination after consultation with the Research Contracts and Intellectual Property Services Office (RCIPS).

If such permission is given, the thesis will not be added to UCT Library's *OpenUCT* digital repository. Only at the end of the specified period, the thesis will be added to UCT Library's *OpenUCT* digital repository.

Application **must be made before** the time of uploading the thesis for examination so as to enable the DDB (by means of an amended Examiner Declaration Form) to place the examiners under an obligation of confidentiality and to make clear to examiners that, should they wish to discuss the thesis for purposes of examination, the DDB must be informed beforehand so that the DDB can place such persons under an obligation of confidentiality as well.

Please see http://www.uct.ac.za/research/openaccess_content/ for more details on UCT's Open Access policy.

Copyright

The University recognises the rights of those who have ownership of copyright. Members of the University are explicitly prohibited from infringing copyright, either in terms of publications or software.

A candidate may, subject to prior approval of his/her supervisor(s), publish part or the whole of the work done under supervision for the degree before presenting it for the examination. Copyright rests with the author. However, no publication may, without the consent of Senate, contain a statement that the published material was, or is to be, submitted in part or in full requirement for the degree.

Further, when presenting a dissertation or thesis, the candidate is deemed, by doing so, to be granting the University free licence to publish it in whole or in part, in any format that the University deems fit.

Patents

This is a complex issue and is governed by University rules and guidelines. Students wishing to pursue it should consult with their supervisor(s) and the Research Office.

JOINT PUBLICATION

It is common practice for joint publications between the candidate and the supervisor(s) to be generated through the research process. There are differing conventions across the Faculty about the ordering of authors. This should be clarified and jointly agreed between the student and the supervisor(s) early in the MoU.

INCORPORATION OF STUDENTS INTO THE LIFE OF THE FACULTY

Postgraduate students are formally incorporated into the life of the Faculty through the following structures:

The Science Postgraduate Students' Council (SPSC)

Postgraduate students have a representative forum in the form of the Science Postgraduate Students' Council. This body comprises one representative from each of the 12 Science Faculty Departments, elected by their fellow postgraduates. The Deputy Dean charged with postgraduate affairs is an *ex officio* member. The Chair of the Science Postgraduate Students' Council represents Science Faculty postgraduate students on a number of University-wide committees. The SPSC also plays an important social role.

The Dean's Advisory Committee and Science Faculty Board

Postgraduate students are represented, via the SPSC, on the two main decision making bodies of the Faculty, viz. the Dean's Advisory Committee (a committee of the Dean, Deputy Deans and Heads of Departments) and the Science Faculty Board.

The Faculty Executive Committee

The Deputy Dean who is *ex officio* member of the SPSC serves on the Faculty Executive Committee which meets every week and allows for timeous action on postgraduate matters when necessary.

Orientation

An orientation event is held annually, at which postgraduate students are addressed on issues such as rights and responsibilities, administrative issues, institutional relationships, financing and so on. It is typically held in April/May, and is hosted by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor responsible for research and is open to all postgraduate students at UCT.

INCORPORATION OF STUDENTS INTO THE LIFE OF THE UNIVERSITY

The University has a Board for Graduate Studies, chaired by a Deputy Vice-Chancellor. All Faculties are represented on this body by both a staff and a student representative. This Board is charged with improving the postgraduate educational experience within the University at large. In addition, a University Postgraduate Student Council looks after the interests of UCT postgraduate students in general. The Postgraduate Student Centre on the Upper Campus is intended to be a place for formal and informal contact between postgraduate students across all Faculties. It contains workshop and meeting facilities, computers for word processing, newspapers and magazines.

POST-DOCTORAL FELLOWS

For administrative purposes, to facilitate access to the various services on the campus, post-doctoral fellows are registered on the University's student system. This is done through the Postgraduate Centre & Funding Office in the Otto Beit Building. However, it is the Science Faculty's belief that post-doctoral students should be considered equivalent to members of staff and be incorporated into the intellectual and social life of departments.

University of Cape Town

Avoiding Plagiarism: A Guide for Students

What is Plagiarism?

You commit plagiarism – intentionally or not - in written work when you use another person's sentences, ideas or opinions without acknowledging them as being from that other person.

In academic work, researchers build on the ideas of others. This is a legitimate and accepted way of doing research. Plagiarism is using someone else's ideas or words and presenting them as if they are your own. It is therefore a form of academic cheating, stealing or deception. Because plagiarism is an offence, all universities take a very serious view of anyone who is found cheating. Those who are suspected of having plagiarised, will be referred to the Vice-Chancellor or nominee for possible disciplinary action in terms of the rules on disciplinary jurisdiction and procedures (DJP1.1).

Not all plagiarism is deliberate, but even inadvertent plagiarism will be severely penalized. It is therefore your responsibility to know what will be regarded as plagiarism and to know how to avoid it.

What makes plagiarism tricky to avoid and dangerous is that it can take many forms.

Forms of Plagiarism

Academic writing requires of you to discuss existing literature but at the same time to come up with your own ideas; to rely on the findings of other researchers, but also to say something new and original; to give an exposition of key readings on the topic, but to express it in your own structure and own words. It is academically difficult to manage a path between these seemingly contradictory demands.

Plagiarism can range from deliberate academic dishonesty to accidental academic sloppiness, and can range from serious and clear forms of plagiarism to instances that are less obvious.

Obvious forms of plagiarism include:

1. Buying or borrowing a paper and copying it
2. Hiring someone to write the paper or thesis for you
3. Cutting and pasting large portions of text from the web or from someone else's paper or book without any quotation marks (or clear indentation for block quotes) or proper reference to the source. The ease of cutting-and-pasting from electronic sources makes this a form of plagiarism that is particularly widespread.
4. Word-for-word copying of a sentence, or paragraph without any proper acknowledgement
5. Direct translation into English of a paper - or large sections of writing - written in another language
6. Citing sources that you didn't actually use
7. Using substantive extracts from your own earlier work without acknowledgement

Less obvious forms of plagiarism include:8. *Not giving proper credit to someone else's ideas or findings*¹.

When is it proper to give credit and when not? As a general rule, you need to give a reference for any text, diagram, table, illustration or an idea if it comes from:

- a. a book, journal, website, or any other public medium
- b. what someone has said in an interview you have conducted
- c. someone's personal correspondence in the form of a letter or email

You don't need to give a reference or give credit if the idea, text, diagram, table, illustration or idea comes from:

- a. your own insights, work or experiences. Ideas from co-authored papers, however, still need to be acknowledged
- b. writing up your own field notes or lab reports
- c. "common knowledge", common sense observations, well-established facts, historical events (but you would obviously have to give a reference if you use an historical *document*) and myths. It is, of course, difficult to know exactly when something is "common knowledge", but a general rule to follow is: if the same observation is made in multiple sources without any attached references, or if it is something that the general public is well aware of, then no references are needed.

9. *Improper paraphrasing.*

The rule to "put it in your own words" is not always helpful, because many of the accepted key words in academic discourse have precise meaning or are accepted expressions that you shouldn't change. However, whenever you do written work you must distinguish what you have written from what you are paraphrasing or quoting. To paraphrase is to summarise someone else's ideas in your own writing style, sentence structures and, where applicable, own words. This is a particularly demanding task for writers whose first language is not English.

10. *Failing to give a proper reference*

You may copy word for word (but not significant chunks) and you are expected to build on the ideas of others, but then you must give proper credit to the source of the quotation or the paraphrased argument, idea or reasoning.

11. *Not acknowledging outsourcing of substantive data analysis*

You may have someone else do the descriptive statistics or statistical data analysis for you, but you need to acknowledge the extent to which it is not your own analysis. In cases where the statistical analysis (model fitting or estimation) forms the central thesis, instead of just being a minor section, or where the thesis is in a discipline that requires you to demonstrate this skill of analysis, it is unacceptable to outsource it, even if you do acknowledge it.

¹ Stolley, K, Brizee, A. & Paiz, J. [Overview and contradictions](#) and [Is it plagiarism yet?](#) Retrieved August 12, 2014.

How to Avoid Plagiarism ²

When you start reading and taking notes, carefully distinguish between material that is quoted, material that is paraphrased in your own words and own structure, and material that is your own and expressed in your own words. The way you can distinguish between these different types of sources is to use a different colour for each one, or to put a big Q for “quote”, P for “paraphrase” or M for “mine” after the relevant section. Make sure that you keep scrupulous track of the author, year, title, and page from which you are taking the quote. There are numerous electronic tools that can assist you with this, such as RefWorks and Mendeley. (See section on “resources” below.)

1. *Fully reference and acknowledge the work of others*

While academic staff will teach you about systems of referencing, and how to avoid plagiarising, you too need to take responsibility for your own academic career. Knowing how to give proper credit, cite appropriately, acknowledge the original source and reference accurately is an essential step in avoiding plagiarism. There are numerous referencing conventions and you are expected to use a referencing convention that is accepted in your discipline. There are many guides on how to reference properly. See “Referencing Conventions” below for resources and guides.

2. *Use your own expressions and present your work in your own writing style*

It is tempting to use someone else’s elegantly structured phrase or sentence/s, but doing so without proper quoting (acknowledging your use of their exact words) constitutes plagiarism. It is not enough to change just a word here and there when paraphrasing, you need to use your own sentence constructions. Of course, there are accepted key words in specific academic discourses that have precise meaning or are accepted expressions; you shouldn’t try to put these precise and commonly accepted expressions in your own words.

3. *Organise your work and structure your reasoning in your own way*

Don’t merely give properly acknowledged summaries of other people’s work (paraphrasing), develop your own sequence of reasoning and line of argumentation.

4. *Use TURNITIN*

Turnitin is an internet-based service that checks the extent of unoriginal content in your paper or thesis. It will identify all the parts where you have copied text from elsewhere. Where you have acknowledged doing so with direct quotes, that is acceptable. Of course, you should not have too many direct quotes since you are required, after all, to demonstrate your own academic writing and critical thinking skills. Identified copied content that is not acknowledged is plagiarism and you must reword and restructure these identified sections. Note that Turnitin is not a guarantee that there is no plagiarism – it is only a guide. See more about Turnitin [here](#).

Note that you should not submit the same re-worked draft multiple times because the system will then compare your new version with the earlier one you submitted and indicate a very high unoriginality score.

² University of Leicester. [Avoiding Plagiarism](#). Retrieved August 12, 2014.

UCT Rules and Senate Policy

RULES ON CONDUCT FOR STUDENTS (Student Rules - Academic conduct)

RCS2.4 A student-

(a) must refrain from dishonest conduct in any examination, test or in respect of completion and/or submission of any other form of academic assessment. Dishonest conduct includes but is not limited to plagiarism.

(b) may not submit the work of any other person in any examination, test or in respect of the completion and/or submission of any other form of academic assessment without full and proper attribution and acknowledgement.

RULES FOR DEGREES (Rules relating to examinations - Examination sessions and class tests)

G18.12 Dishonesty, including plagiarism or the submission by a student of other people's work as his/her own, in an examination or any other form of assessment will be dealt with in terms of the disciplinary rules.

SENATE POLICY

The Senate policy (PC11/99 dated 6.12.1999), sets out the following:

(i) For each course, academic staff must prescribe a referencing convention, or allow a student to choose from a set of referencing conventions prescribed by the academic staff member (and by implication must teach this key academic literacy skill to junior students) when setting assignments;

and

(ii) All undergraduates are required to make and include a declaration each time they submit written work for assessment.

Declaration

Each time your work is assessed, you will need to insert the declaration (see shaded block) or one like it.

Plagiarism Declaration:

1. I know that plagiarism is a serious form of academic dishonesty.
2. I have read the document about avoiding plagiarism, am familiar with its contents and have avoided all forms of plagiarism mentioned there.
3. Where I have used the words of others, I have indicated this by the use of quotation marks.
4. I have referenced all quotations and properly acknowledged other ideas borrowed from others.
5. I have not and shall not allow others to plagiarise my work.
6. I declare that this is my own work.
7. I am attaching the summary of the Turnitin match overview (when required to do so).

Signature:

Declaration to be included in your thesis

In the front of your thesis, a signed and dated declaration in the following format must be included:

<p>Declaration</p> <p>I,, , hereby declare that the work on which this thesis is based is my original work (except where acknowledgements indicate otherwise) and that neither the whole work nor any part of it has been, is being, or is to be submitted for another degree in this or any other university. I authorise the University to reproduce for the purpose of research either the whole or any portion of the contents in any manner whatsoever.</p> <p>Signature:..... Date:</p>
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Referencing Conventions

The responsibility is on your lecturer to ensure that you are (or become) familiar with, and observe, one of the internationally recognised guides to scholarly conventions on presentation, documentation of sources and referencing. It is your responsibility to question any part of this that you do not understand, to apply the rules, and to be aware of the consequences of plagiarism.

There are many ways of referencing, and the University has not set one way as preferable to another. The Library and Writing Centre, however, recommend one of the following forms:

- the Harvard system,
- American
- Modern Language Association (MLA) or
- Footnoting.

They also have a standard for referencing articles in electronic journals.

For advice and guides on referencing see:

UCT Library Referencing Help:

<http://libguides.lib.uct.ac.za/refworks>

and

<http://www.lib.uct.ac.za/research-help/referencing-help/>

and

<http://libguides.lib.uct.ac.za/refworks-referencing>

Harvard UCT: Handbook on citation:

<http://www.lib.uct.ac.za/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/harvard-uct-2014.pdf>

Common citation styles (University of Melbourne): <http://www.lib.unimelb.edu.au/cite/>

If you are confused because each lecturer tells you to reference your work in a different way, discuss this with him or her.

Consequences of Plagiarising

By committing plagiarism you will get zero for the plagiarised work, and may fail the course or your thesis. In addition, the matter must be referred to the Vice-Chancellor or nominee for possible disciplinary action in terms of the rules on disciplinary jurisdiction and procedures (DJP1.1) against you.

If this is the case, and the plagiarism is substantial, the Registrar has indicated that, unless there are unusual circumstances, the prosecution will ask for your expulsion. Even if you are not expelled, a conviction for cheating on your academic record is likely to limit your career opportunities. If you are preparing for a profession, you should know that a conviction for cheating in academic work may bar you from professional licensing temporarily or permanently.

Web-based Information and Resources

There are many sites and guides on the internet regarding plagiarism.

Video on how to avoid plagiarism: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2XUPZ9jx4gs>

[A Student's Guide to Avoiding Plagiarism](#) (UCT Philosophy department): this handy and concise resource looks at forms of plagiarism, gives tips on how to avoid it and provides some examples.

[UCT Faculty of Health Sciences Guide](#) A site listing different referencing conventions and guide to Turnitin

UCT information on [RefWorks](#)

Information on [APA referencing](#) convention

Guide on the [Harvard referencing](#) convention

UCT Writing Centre [on referencing](#)

UCT writing Centre on [postgraduate writing](#)

UCT Writing Centre on resources in [grammar](#)

The UCT [Senate policy declaration](#) on plagiarism

Turnitin services – [Student Guide](#)

Contact the Vula Team for further support: help@vula.uct.ac.za or 021-650 5500

Assistance for Staff and Students

The Library Staff, the Writing Centre and the Office for Research Integrity are willing to assist you, by providing details of referencing conventions, and helping you use them.

UCT Library staff for general queries about referencing:
Amina Adam; Jen Eidelman; Cyril Walters

UCT Library staff for queries about RefWorks:
Dilshaad Brey ; Dianne Steele; Gill Morgan; Khumbulele Faltein

UCT Library staff for queries about Mendeley:
Tamzyn Suliaman

Research Ethics:
Dr Robert McLaughlin (UCT Office for Research Integrity)

UCT Writing Centre
<http://www.writingcentre.uct.ac.za/writing/talk/contacts>
Tel: 021 650 5021

University of Cape Town
Avoiding Plagiarism: A Guide for Students
A checklist to help you avoid plagiarism in your work³

<p>1. I have acknowledged the sources of all the ideas (or tables, diagrams, illustrations) I have taken from someone else.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>I have given proper credit wherever I have referred to, borrowed or used the ideas, findings, tables, diagrams or illustrations I have found in another text.</i> • <i>It is not necessary to give a reference to ideas that are common knowledge, well-accepted facts or my own work.</i> 	
<p>2. Where I have used the exact words from another text, I have placed these in quotation marks and inserted a full reference in the text.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>I have used direct quotations sparingly.</i> • <i>Where I have used quotations, I have ensured that the purpose of doing so is clear, and that I used it as an important step in the development of my own argument.</i> • <i>Long quotes (longer than 6 lines) are usually blocked and indented in the text.</i> 	
<p>3. Where I have paraphrased the work of another, I have done so with integrity and have used my own words and my own sentence structure.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Although I have used my own words and own structure, I have acknowledged that the idea was someone else's and I have therefore supplied the reference in the text.</i> 	
<p>4. I have exercised caution when making my original notes from the readings I have consulted by carefully recording where I have written down the exact words (quotations), where I have paraphrased and where I have noted my own ideas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Where I used the author's exact words, I put them in quotation marks and have supplied the reference in the text.</i> 	
<p>5. I am familiar with the referencing convention I have adopted in my work and have ensured that all the references are correct and complete.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>I have inserted the references in the text where applicable and have listed all the references I have used in a complete list at the end of the work.</i> 	
<p>6. I have NOT copied or bought the work from someone else.</p>	
<p>7. I have NOT cut and pasted from other sources, except in the few cases where I have placed these in quotation marks to indicate that I have used someone else's exact words.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>I have used these as direct quotes with proper acknowledgement.</i> 	
<p>8. Any analysis I have run is my own work except where I have acknowledged appropriately.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Where demonstrating my own skill of analysis is required, I have not outsourced this part of my work.</i> 	
<p>9. I have submitted my work to Turnitin to check for unoriginal content.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>I am attaching a summary of the Turnitin match overview that indicates the extent of unoriginal (including directly quoted and acknowledged) text.</i> • <i>I understand that Turnitin is merely a guide and provides no guarantee that there is no plagiarism</i> 	
<p>10. I have inserted a declaration in my work testifying that I have adhered to the rules regarding plagiarism.</p>	

³ Adapted from "[Checklist to help you prevent plagiarism in your work](#)", Curtin University, Australia, and from the UCT Philosophy Department, "[Avoiding plagiarism](#)"