Department of Conservation Ecology and Entomology PhD proposal evaluation form

PhD students can only present their proposal after they have been conditionally selected for a PhD by the Faculty of AgriSciences Research Committee. This presentation of their proposal MUST be completed during the first year of their PhD.

The supervisors must select a departmental assessment panel. The departmental assessment panel will consist of a chairperson (not necessarily the chair of the department) and an additional one or two other evaluators. The chairperson of the panel must be an academic staff member of the Department of Conservation Ecology and Entomology, while the evaluators can be internal or external (but must be experts with a PhD in the proposed topic area).

Send the written proposal (the 750-word description submitted to Faculty on the "Recommendation for Admission of Candidate to Doctoral Study" form[1]) to the chairperson of the departmental assessment panel and to the evaluators at least one week prior to the proposal presentation. If the supervisor wants the panel also to act as the internal animal ethics committee then they should submit a second proposal which considers the ethical points that are listed on the PhD application form alongside the proposal.

The assessment panel convenes and completes the form below, and if A or B is ticked then the panel chairperson must also tick the option "Successful candidate, finally selected" and sign the Faculty of AgriSciences "Recommendation for Admission of Candidate to Doctoral Study" form. Please submit the originals both forms, namely the Faculty of AgriSciences "Recommendation for Admission of Candidate to Doctoral Study" form and this form to the Departmental chair for submission to the Faculty Committee. It is recommended that supervisors keep copies of both forms.

Things to consider as a member of the research panel for a PhD proposal:

Is there scientific merit in this research?

Are the objectives clear and obtainable?

Is this proposal novel enough to warrant a PhD?

Are the methods of this proposal suitable and appropriate for this study?

Is this proposed research achievable in a three-year time period?

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[1] **Download forms from: http://www.sun.ac.za/english/faculty/agri/staff/academic-administration**

Student name .... **Student number** ....

Supervisor(s)... **Date**...

The Department of Conservation Ecology and Entomology assessment panel has determined that the project proposal (please tick one):

A – has scientific merit and the proposed PhD is feasible and the research panel recommends that the student is accepted.

B – has scientific merit and the proposal is feasible, although the panel feels that the supervisor and student should discuss the issues below (see comments section) and adjust the written proposal to include these comments, after which they recommend that the student is accepted.

C – has scientific merit, although feel that the written proposal and the project as a whole should incorporate the issues below (see comments section). The panel requests to see the written proposal again prior to accepting the project.

D – is below the expected standard. The project either does not have scientific merit or is unrealistic (see reasons in the comments section below). The committee feels that the candidate should resubmit the written proposal again and present the oral proposal again to a closed meeting comprising of the research panel and their supervisor(s).

E – is too far below standard, and so the committee recommends that the application be rejected.

Comments...

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Is there an attached document with further comments (Y/N): ……

Does project require ethical clearance (Y/N): ……

If yes, does the panel feel that the project is ethically sound (Y/N): ……

Assessment panel chairperson: **Name of evaluators:**

Signature:

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Name: …………………………………………