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UNIVERSITY

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# Submission and examination process for Master's theses

Postgraduate Examination Office (PEO)

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

May 2020

## Submission of a Master's thesis

- In the first semester of your final year, *students* must complete an Intention to Submit form and submit it electronically to the PEO (and copy in your supervisor) before the deadline date.
- Examiners are then nominated by the *supervisor(s)*
  - Two examiners in total: 1 x internal examiner from SU; and 1 x external examiner from another South African university or research institute
  - Examiners must be approved by Higher Degrees and Research Committee; Faculty Board; and Senate
  - The names of examiners are **confidential**
- Once student and supervisor(s) are satisfied that the thesis is ready for examination, the *student* needs to format the thesis according to regulations.

- The University prescribes a **thesis template** for all MA submissions
  - Details can be found in the General Calendar (Part I) of the University
- **Formatting requirements**
  - Typesetting: Line spacing; font size; and margins etc.
  - Compulsory information: SU prescribes set wording for the first four pages, including the declaration and copyright etc.

<http://library.sun.ac.za/en-za/Help/Pages/online-thesis-submission.aspx>

## Editing of a Master's thesis

- *Students* are required to pay due diligence to the presentation of their work, including formatting
- All theses are required to undergo language editing *before* submission to the PEO
- *Students* should rigorously check their referencing
- SU has a strict no-tolerance policy towards **plagiarism**
  - Ignorance of referencing rules will not constitute an excuse
  - The plagiarism policy can be found on the Division for Research Development page on the SU website

<https://www.sun.ac.za/english/research-innovation/Research-Development/policies-guidelines>

# Examination of a Master's thesis



**Candidates need to submit the following documents to the PEO via email in a zipped folder using their name and student number as the folder name:**

1. A pdf and Word version of the full and collated work;
2. A copy of the Turnitin summary report page indicating the similarity score;
3. Ethical clearance information:
  1. A copy of the approval letter issued by the Research Ethics Committee (REC) if ethical clearance was required **OR**
  2. A copy of the exemption letter issued by the Research Ethics Committee (REC) if ethical clearance was not required.
4. The declaration by the supervisor that they have reviewed the Turnitin report, indicate the scope/credit weighting of the work and agree that the work may be submitted in for examination

## Examination of a Master's thesis

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- The submission of the thesis and supporting documents for examination is handled electronically via email to the PEO
- No thesis will be sent for examination unless all 4 documents are received by the PEO in the zipped folder format requested.
- The PEO will then send the thesis to the examiners.
- Examiners are given 6 weeks to examine the thesis and submit their reports to the PEO
- Once both examiners have submitted their reports, the PEO will distribute the reports to the Chair of the Department
- The departmental chair will convene an examination panel to consider the reports and to decide on the final mark to be awarded
- The chair or supervisor will inform the student of the result

# General criteria of a Master's thesis



1. Adequate delimitation and conceptualising of the field and subject of research
2. Adequate command of the relevant research method
3. Adequate familiarity with the relevant literature
4. Clear and systematic presentation of the material and logical exposition of the argument
5. Proper documentation and support of the results of the research
6. The contribution of the study to the field of research
7. Acceptable linguistic and stylistic presentation
8. Acceptable ethical standards

## Recommendation of a Master's thesis

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### Possible recommendations by the examiners

- i. The degree be awarded to the candidate
- ii. The degree may be conferred upon the candidate, provided that the revision, in accordance with the recommendations of the examiners, is completed to the satisfaction of the supervisor (i.e. the examiners do not receive the thesis again)
- iii. The degree may be conferred upon the candidate, provided that a material revision is completed to the satisfaction of the examiners, as agreed upon by the examination panel (i.e. the examiners must approve the revisions)
- iv. The degree may not be conferred on the thesis in its current form; the candidate must revise and resubmit the thesis
- v. The degree may not be conferred upon the candidate and the work may not be resubmitted for examination



## Finalisation of a Master's degree

- Once the recommendation has been made, *students* will have the opportunity to make changes as deemed necessary by the examiners
- Once those changes are completed to the satisfaction of the supervisor(s) or examiners, *students* are required to submit a final copy electronically
  - Must be submitted on the SU Library website, in conjunction with supervisor(s)
- Hard copies of the thesis can be printed and bound at the expense of the student at SUN Media after the electronic submission is approved
  - It is compulsory to provide supervisor(s) with a bound copy as well as to the examiners if they request one.

**STUDENT MAY NOW GRADUATE!**

## Important dates and deadlines

### **December 2020 Graduation**

- Notice of intent to submit = 11 March 2020
- **Submit thesis + supporting documents = 7 September 2020**
- Electronic submission (SUNScholar) = 2 December 2020

### **March/April 2021 Graduation**

- Notice of intent to submit = 20 May 2020
- **Submit thesis + supporting documents = 2 November 2020**
- Electronic submission (SUNScholar) = TBC (February 2021)

### **December 2021 Graduation**

- Notice of intent to submit = 25 August 2020
- **Submit thesis + supporting documents = 1 March 2021**
- Electronic submission (SUNScholar) = TBC

## POSTGRADUATE EXAMINATION OFFICE

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