

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 and associated paperwork **MUST** be completed during the first year of their PhD.

The supervisors must select a departmental research panel. The departmental research panel will consist of a chairperson (not necessarily the chair of the department) and an additional two other evaluators. The chairperson of the panel must be a staff member of the Department of Conservation Ecology and Entomology and hold a PhD, while the evaluators can be internal or external (the Chair needs to hold a PhD, and the panel members need to have either a PhD or a MSc with at least 5 years of experience in the study field, and may include post docs).

PhD students have to submit a full written proposal. The full written proposal needs an introduction to the problem the PhD student wishes to study, a strong research driven hypothesis or research question, and a description as to how they are going to achieve this aim, with sub-aims and hypotheses for individual data chapters. All PhD students will also need to submit the 1000-word description to Faculty on the “Recommendation for Admission of Candidate to Doctoral Study” form¹ and to the research panel. All documentation (full proposals and 1000-word project descriptions) need to be sent to all members of the research panel 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 research 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 of 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?

Student name **Student number**

Supervisor(s) **Date**

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

- A** Study has scientific merit and the proposed PhD is feasible and the research panel recommends that the student is accepted.
- B** Study 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** Study has scientific merit, although feel that the written proposal and the project as a whole should incorporate major changes (see comments section). The panel requests to see the 1000-word proposal again prior to accepting the project.
- D** Study is below the expected standard. The project either does not have scientific merit, is unrealistic or insufficient information for the panel to make a decision (see reasons in the comments section below). The panel feels that the candidate should resubmit the full written proposal again.
- E** Study is too far below standard, and so the research panel recommends that the application be rejected.

Comments:

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

Research panel chairperson:

Name of evaluators:

Signature:

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Name:

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