aFACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
UNIVERSITY OF WAIKATO

GRADUATE GUIDE TO
MASTERS THESES AND DISSERTATIONS

Revised January 2017

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This handbook is designed specifically for Masters students and supervisory staff of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. It provides information on the processes involved in undertaking Masters research in the Faculty, including what should be expected of supervision. It should be read in conjunction with the relevant Programme's graduate handbook, the *Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences Graduate Handbook,* as well as relevant regulations found in the *University of Waikato Calendar* listed in section 1.5

Note: Doctoral students should refer to the School of Graduate Research and higher research degrees web pages for information on enrolment, higher degree qualifications, and requirements for theses.

For further assistance with your thesis or dissertation please contact your Programme Graduate Adviser, the Faculty Academic Services Manager, or the Faculty Graduate Support Administrator.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Nature of Masters Research

Masters theses and dissertations involve the student undertaking a significant research project: defining a research topic or problem, planning the research programme, selecting and using appropriate methodologies of investigation to collect and analyse information and data, under the supervision of an academic staff member. In the process the student should learn much about the research process, including how to undertake research in their area of study, how to deal with the information collected, and how to write this up.

The research, which must be the candidate's original work, is written up as a thesis or dissertation that demonstrates the research process and the argument or results.

1.2 Academic Prerequisites for a Masters Degree

1.2.1 **Master of Arts** (MA), **Master of Social Sciences** (MSocSc)

Candidates for these degrees are expected to have either:

a. a Bachelors degree with a major in the same subject and to have achieved a satisfactory grade average – normally a B or better over the 300 level papers of their major subject or over all of their undergraduate papers in the subject, or

b. a Bachelors degree with Honours, or equivalent, in the same subject and to have achieved a satisfactory grade average – normally a B or better in their 500 level papers.

1.2.2 **Master of Clinical Animal Behaviour** (MCAB), **Master of Environment and Society** (MEnvSoc), **Master of Media and Creative Technologies** (MMCT)

Candidates for these degrees are expected to have a Bachelors degree in the same subject, or a subject considered equivalent by the Chair of the School, and have achieved a satisfactory grade average – normally a B or better.

1.2.3 **Master of Environmental Planning** (MEP)

Candidates for the MEP are expected to have a Bachelor of Environmental Planning or a Bachelor of Social Sciences with Honours in Resources and Environmental Planning or a Postgraduate Diploma in Environmental Planning, and have achieved a satisfactory grade average – normally a B or better.

The regulations governing these degrees are set out in *The University of Waikato Calendar*. Note that a Programme may have additional requirements and potential students should check their eligibility to enrol with the Programme/School of Study in which they wish to enrol.

1.3 Programme Responsibilities

The provision of supervision and resources for Masters research is made by Programmes and is the responsibility of the Chair of School. Each Programme has processes that follow University guidelines, but, because they have distinctive academic characteristics, they also may have specific policies and requirements, which are set out in their own handbooks.

The responsibility of the Chair of School, through the relevant Programme, is to maintain procedures and processes that are documented at Programme level, meet University policies, reflect good practice and have systems, which check that procedures are being followed. In some Programmes, the Programme Convenor may delegate responsibility for this to the Graduate Adviser or where relevant, the Programme or School Graduate Studies Committee.

The Programme should have processes that:
- check that students meet the requirements for enrolment before recommending approval of enrolment to the Dean, through the Faculty Graduate Support Administrator and relevant Graduate Adviser;
- arrange for effective supervision and monitoring of candidates and maintain audit trails;
- check that there will be continuity of supervision for the candidate throughout the research process, provided that the research is completed within the appropriate time-frame, and have contingency measures in place that allow for the candidate to be adequately supervised in the event that a supervisor is absent for extended periods (more than four consecutive weeks);
- approve initial thesis topics and check that adequate resources can be made available at the times required;
- monitor progress and attempt to resolve any difficulties that become apparent;
- provide guidance and support to candidates;
- support candidates when they have problems with supervision or with Programme processes;
- provide support for supervisors;
- intervene to remedy any defects in supervision or student progress;
- maintain quality assurance processes that regularly review and improve Programme processes.

1.4 Quality Assurance Processes

It is important for the University to be assured that academic standards are high, supervision is being provided to a high standard and that effective administrative systems are in place. To this end the Faculty and Schools should document key steps in their processes and procedures and keep sufficiently detailed records to enable, when necessary, a full review of the progress of individual students.

1.5 University Regulations

All students should make themselves conversant with the following University policies and regulations, which are detailed in *The University of Waikato Calendar* (http://calendar.waikato.ac.nz/):

- Dissertations and Theses Regulations
- Masters degree Regulations
- Personal Programmes of Study Regulations
- Assessment Regulations (including regulations on plagiarism)
- Policy on the Use of Māori for Assessment
- Student Research Regulations,
- Ethical Conduct Human Research and Related Activities Regulations
- Student Discipline Regulations (includes regulations on plagiarism, misconduct, discrimination and harassment)
- Computer Systems Regulations

1.6 Health and Safety Requirements

Students are required to comply with any safety regulations, including fire evacuation procedures (which are displayed below the fire alarms in every building).

2. INFORMATION TO BE PROVIDED BEFORE ENROLMENT

Before enrolment, potential students should be provided with information which will permit them to make an informed decision about enrolling at the University of Waikato. They should be referred to the appropriate handbooks with Faculty and Programme information applicable to the student's areas of interest.

The minimum information potential students should have access to about the Faculty, Programme, or School of Study, should include the following:
- areas of specialisation of the Programme;
- research resources available;
- specialised skills and areas of expertise of staff;
- enrolment procedures and contact people;
- provision of supervision;
- information about facilities and resources available to candidates.

This information is provided in the Faculty Graduate Handbook and/or the Programme/School of Study graduate handbook.

3. PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS BEFORE UNDERTAKING RESEARCH

Undertaking research for submission in a thesis or dissertation is a demanding activity, requiring a high level of academic ability, commitment and stamina. A potential student, therefore, should be certain that they are interested in the proposed research topic. They should have the necessary knowledge and skills to do so or they should undertake such course work or study that is necessary to provide them with the required knowledge and skills.

Students make their initial enquiry in a number of ways and should be referred as soon as possible to the relevant Programme or Programmes. International enquiries must also be referred to the International Services Office at the earliest opportunity.

3.1 Checking Entry Requirements and Resource Availability

Potential students wishing to enrol should contact the Programme concerned and:
- check that they meet the entry requirements;
- if their first language is a language other than English, provide a copy of one of the following:
    i. an academic IELTS score of at least 6.5 overall, including no less than 6.0 in each band; or
    ii. a paper-based TOEFL score of at least 600 overall, including a TWE (Test of Written English) of 5.0 or better; or
    iii. an iBT (Internet-Based TOEFL) score of 90 with a Writing score of 22; or
    iv. a computer-based TOEFL score of at least 250, including a TWE of 5.0; or
    v. provide other evidence of their English language capabilities to satisfy the Programme.

    Note:
    i. Admission to the MA(Applied) in Applied Linguistics requires a higher score.
    ii. The English language proficiency requirements for admission to particular qualifications are at the discretion of the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences.

- make sure that suitable supervision is available, taking into account leave provisions and other situations that may involve the absence of the potential supervisor(s);
- submit their application to enrol to the Programme for approval by the Programme Graduate Adviser. It will then be forwarded to the Gateway for data entry. The Faculty Graduate Support Administrator completes the administrative process.

3.2 The Thesis or Dissertation

A thesis or dissertation is a carefully written exposition of the research undertaken by the candidate under supervision. It should:
- critically investigate the topic;
- demonstrate an appropriate level of expertise in the methods of research and scholarship;
- demonstrate the independent development of ideas relevant to the topic;
- present the results lucidly in a manner which makes a contribution to the subject area concerned.

It should normally include the following: a clear outline of the research question to be addressed and the theoretical, contextual or disciplinary basis of the candidate's research, and provide an overview of the rest of the thesis. Although structures, methods, and formats may differ between and within disciplines, it should normally include discussion of the methodology. It should also develop the arguments in a sustained and coherent manner and these should be brought to a conclusion.

The written thesis or dissertation, with careful argument and presentation, is a fundamental part of the evidence that the candidate is, or is not, worthy of the award of the degree. No matter how good the candidate's research may be, it is an essential condition for the award of the degree that the research is presented in a well-written thesis or dissertation that clearly justifies the candidate's research methods and conclusions.

In addition, the written thesis or dissertation will normally contain:
- a statement of intellectual ownership;
- an acknowledgement of their supervisor(s);
- an abstract;
- a table of contents;
- a table of diagrams and illustrations (where applicable);
- a detailed description of the candidate's research methods, findings and data and the overall conclusions of the thesis;
- a bibliography or reference list;
- indices (of important words, phrases, and symbols) and/or glossaries as appropriate.

*The required word length for a 120 point thesis within the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences is **30,000** words (to a maximum of **50,000** words); for a 90 point thesis **22,500** words (to a maximum of **30,000** words), and for a 60 point dissertation **15,000** words (to a maximum of **20,000** words).*

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These guidelines exclude the bibliography (or reference list), footnotes and appendices. The Chair of the School in which the candidate is enrolled has the discretion (except where the Chair of School is supervisor), in consultation with the supervisor(s), to allow a thesis or dissertation to exceed these guidelines where it is thought this would be more appropriate for the topic. Chairs of School should confirm in writing to the candidate that such permission has been granted, specifying the maximum word length approved.

Detailed information concerning the form and style of theses is available online at this link http://www.waikato.ac.nz/library/study/guides/theses.shtml.

Regulations regarding dissertations and theses are set out in *The University of Waikato Calendar.*

3.3 Language

Theses and dissertations will normally be written in English, but a candidate may request permission to submit a thesis or dissertation written in Māori.

Candidates may submit a thesis or dissertation in a language other than English or Māori only with the permission of the Faculty and Programme. Such permission will normally be given only where the use of the language is appropriate to the topic of the thesis or dissertation, and examiners can be appointed who will examine in that language.

Theses or dissertations submitted in any language (including English) are expected to conform to the normal standards of presentation (grammar, spelling, style) in that language.

3.4 Withholding Access to a Thesis

In keeping with worldwide academic practice, the University of Waikato endorses the principle that research theses are, by their very nature, available for public inspection. In so doing, it helps to ensure that intellectual developments can be appraised, used, and built upon by all interested parties. To this end, theses that have been passed by the examiners are lodged in the University of Waikato Library. It is usually possible to write a thesis that can be made public based on research and data that may be confidential. Candidates and their supervisors should design their research to that end. However, the University also recognises that in unusual situations, theses contain material that, for commercial or security reasons should be withheld from the public for a period after the thesis has been completed.

An embargo of a dissertation or thesis is an injunction against the release of the thesis for public consultation in the University Library. This may be granted by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor only in response to a request from the candidate that is endorsed by his/her supervisor and Programme/School of Study, and the Dean of the Faculty (or nominee). An embargo of a dissertation or thesis is likely to be approved only under the following circumstances:

i.   if it is pending publication
ii.   if it is pending the filing of a patent.
iii.   to allow for a sponsor to comment
iv.   to protect pre-existing commercial secrets of a sponsor
v.   if there is a pre-existing contractual agreement
vi.   if restriction is necessary under the Privacy Act 1993 or the Official Information Act 1982.

Approval will not normally be granted for any other reasons. Material that the candidate would not wish to be available to the public on grounds other than those above should not be included in the thesis.

An embargo will be approved only for a limited period.

An application for withholding a thesis should normally be made to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor when the candidate applies for enrolment in the Masters degree. If a candidate is receiving support from a commercial or government establishment for whom he/she is carrying out the thesis research, then it will usually be clear at the time of registration whether conditions for an embargo are likely to be fulfilled when the thesis is completed. However, it is recognised that there are circumstances when the confidential/sensitive nature of the thesis research does not become clear until that research is near completion. For that reason, requests for an embargo may be made up to the time of submission of the thesis for examination. Applications will not be accepted after the thesis has been submitted.

When the need for an embargo of a dissertation or thesis has been identified, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (through the Postgraduate Studies Office) and the Manager of WaikatoLink should be consulted immediately so that all options can be explored to minimise the extent of any restrictions.

3.5 Policy on Research and Study off Campus

The University of Waikato values its associations with industry, commerce and Crown Research Institutes, which provide it with stimulating and intellectually challenging opportunities and experiences for its research staff and students.

In pursuit of the advantages of these associations, the University seeks to manage its affairs so that the aims, quality and autonomy of its programmes of teaching and research are not limited or devalued.

Research for Masters degrees may be undertaken off the main University campus provided the School is satisfied that:
- the nature of the project is suitable to be conducted at the proposed site;
- adequate facilities are available at the proposed site;
- appropriate supervision is available at the proposed site. This should involve having a specific agreement with an approved academic or research institution;
- a period of time is spent on the University of Waikato campus as agreed with the supervisor.

The processes for entering into agreements with outside bodies are detailed below (Section 3.6). This policy covers off-campus situations both within New Zealand and overseas.

3.6 Guidelines for Masters Students Working in Collaborating Institutions

The University of Waikato is responsible for the academic programme and supervision of enrolled research students, and for the examination of their work. The University must be closely involved with collaborating institutions to ensure that candidates are making appropriate progress. Accordingly, candidates may be permitted to undertake research off-campus only where and when the following criteria are satisfied:
- data collection and examination of key material can only, or can best, be carried out off campus;
- the resources of a collaborating institution are appropriate for the needs of the candidate;
- the staff from the collaborating institution who will provide day-to-day support for the candidate are willing, able and qualified to assist the candidate;
- the collaborating institution will agree for the candidate to have access to all required resources;
- the collaborating institution is able to provide a stimulating research environment;
- the collaborating institution will provide University supervisors with ready access to the candidate and to the research facilities used by the candidate.

Supervision

The supervisory panel for a student who is working in an external institution should include a member of the collaborating institution's staff. The first supervisor normally will be a member of the University staff.

Staff members of collaborating institutions who provide supervision for several University candidates may be beneficially recognised as honorary lecturers of the University.

The University expects its supervisory staff to work actively in the field of the candidate's research and, where supervision is being provided by the staff of the collaborating institution, to share in joint publications with the candidate and other supervisors where appropriate.

Terms and conditions under which the student works

Formulation of formal contractual terms and conditions for a student to work within an external organisation, and to receive support by way of scholarship, study award, access to facilities and other benefits, must be carried out through WaikatoLink. Such terms and conditions will also include agreements on publication rights, ownership of intellectual property (IP), progress reports, and submission and examination of theses.

The student will normally be required to sign an agreement with the University which sets out the rights and obligations of the student for the placement or contract with the external organisation and for the student's supervision arrangements while in the placement or contract.

3.7 Guidelines for when the Student is Absent on Unsupervised Study or Fieldwork

There are situations when candidates who are based in the University may be absent from the campus for extended periods of time, for example involved in fieldwork or study in libraries or museums. This does not cover the situation when the student is formally attached to another organisation and is being supervised by a member of that organisation (see Section 3.6).

*If the candidate is to be without direct supervision and personal contact, then an alternative system of supervision through either telephone contact or email should be established. **Email using the university email address is the preferred method**. The candidate should report regularly and in detail on work progress. The supervisor should keep a record of important matters and decisions covered during email or telephone exchanges.*

The supervisor should be assured that the candidate has access to all the resources required.

A candidate working at a distance is suffering from many disadvantages which are not common to students working on campus or within a large institution. Consequently, the assessment of the student's suitability and progression in work should be carried out even more carefully than would be the case for students who can be observed on a day-to-day basis. Regular checks should be made to ensure that the candidate is following the agreed research plan.

If the period of absence is prolonged, the candidate should spend some periods on campus or have other contact with people working in his/her field so that progress can be discussed in detail.

It is expected that the following matters would be discussed with the candidate as appropriate and agreed actions documented:
- the method and frequency for maintaining contact between the student and supervisor;
- the objectives to be achieved in the exercise and the reporting on those objectives;
- the resources required;
- the people who could provide informal assistance to the student;
- the contacts, authorisation or letters of introduction that may be required;
- whether the candidate has had adequate training in the methodology and or equipment to be used;
- the potential health and safety hazards and whether the candidate has been adequately briefed, trained where necessary, and has adequate equipment in order to minimise identified risks.

3.8 Policy on Intellectual Property

Background

Intellectual property (IP) relates to original works of authorship, technology, products, processes, designs, plant varieties, goodwill and trademarks. Although intangible, the law recognises IP to be just as much a form of property as land, housing or jewellery. Thus, IP can be sold, leased, damaged and trespassed upon.

Since IP is intangible, it is important that its scope and ownership is clearly defined to enable the legal rights of the owner to be enforced. This is made possible with patents, design registrations, trademark registrations, plant variety rights, copyright protection, and recognition of authorship.

It is an important principle that theses should be public documents. Requirements associated with IP should not be allowed to restrict public access to theses without a strong case being made (see Section 3.4).

University Policy

The University's policy with regard to IP, its commercialisation and involvement of students in creating IP is set out in the *Handbook on Research and Outside Professional Activities* (available from WaikatoLink, Programme offices and at this link:
http://www.waikato.ac.nz/research/unilink/uow_staff/Funding/handbook.pdf).

The IP incorporated in a thesis may contain contributions from many sources and situations. These can include input from staff members, use of University resources, development by the candidate before enrolment for the degree programme and/or created during research carried out in the premises of, or with resources of, a Crown Research Institute or company. In such situations the University seeks to be fair to all parties and to set out the rights of each party in an agreement.

The supervisor(s) is(are) responsible for identifying IP to the University by following the procedures set out in the *Handbook on Research and Outside Professional Activities*. A student who has knowledge, or believes, that he/she has created IP should report the belief to their supervisor(s) so that appropriate action can be taken. Until a decision has been made on ownership and rights, the entire matter of IP should be held confidential in order to protect the rights to ownership and benefits to be derived from ownership.

Where a student or staff member brings to a project IP of which he or she has already established ownership that must be disclosed to the supervisor, Chair of School and to WaikatoLink before a University project commences. An agreement for use of the IP will then be negotiated with its owner.

If a student receives a scholarship or funds from any source outside the University, the University will not recognise such support as giving the funding person or body IP rights over any knowledge created as part of the student's University work unless contractual arrangements with the University have been entered into.

If an outside person or body provides IP to a student for use in the student's University work (e.g. research to be reported in the thesis) that provision must be reported by the provider or student to WaikatoLink before commencement of use of that IP. The University will then seek to establish an agreement with the provider for conditions of use.

Where IP is created during the course of research carried out in preparation for presenting a thesis, it is essential that WaikatoLink is informed as soon as possible so that suitable arrangements can be made for protection of IP during examination and lodgement of the thesis in the University Library.

The development of IP during research of a postgraduate student usually involves input from both academic supervisors and the student. It is normal practice for all contributors to be recognised as joint authors of resulting publications and the University encourages such recognition. The University does not support the inclusion of people in authorship who have not contributed to the research.

4. ENROLMENT

A candidate must meet the requirements for entry into the degree and must have an appropriate supervisor for their dissertation or thesis before they can enrol in the:

- Master of Arts (MA)
- Master of Arts (Applied) — Applied Linguistics (MA(Applied))
- Master of Applied Psychology (MAppPsy)
- Master of Clinical Animal Behaviour (MCAB)
- Master of Environment and Society (MEnvSoc)
- Master of Environmental Planning (MEP)
- Master of Media and Creative Technologies (MMCT)
- Master of Music (MMus)
- Master of Social Sciences (MSocSc)

Regulations for these degrees are contained in *The University of Waikato Calendar (*http://calendar.waikato.ac.nz*).*

5. SUPERVISION

5.1 University Policy on Supervision

The University, through the Chair of School, is responsible for providing suitable supervision for student research. Supervisors should be competent in the field and have time to supervise candidates adequately.

Responsibilities of supervisors are clearly stated in this handbook and accountability is expected.

Staff may not supervise candidates with whom they have a close family or personal relationship. Supervision involves close interaction between the candidate and the supervisor(s). If a close emotional or other relationship develops which may interfere with the professional nature of the supervision then the supervisor must initiate steps to change supervisors (see Sections 5.2 to 5.6).

Supervisors should make candidates aware of the ethical standards relevant to their work. This includes the nature of intellectual property and acknowledging the work of others. Supervisors should also check that the work submitted by candidates is the candidate's own and that data have been validly obtained.

5.2 Qualifications of Supervisors

To undertake supervision, the staff member should have a qualification at least equivalent to that which is being examined, not be enrolled in that degree, and have had research experience in the general field of the thesis. A candidate may have one or more supervisors. They may work together as a team (co-supervision) or there may be a panel including a first supervisor and one or more secondary supervisors.

5.3 Guidelines for Programme Processes Relating to Supervision

The Chair of School should ensure their Programmes have procedures that will:
- make sure the appointed supervisor(s) is(are) appropriately qualified and that they have copies of the appropriate regulations, policies and guidelines for the candidate and themselves;
- make sure the supervisor(s) has(have) undertaken research in a field relevant to the thesis and is(are) conversant with the appropriate methodologies and literature in the scope of the thesis;
- require that the 'Guidelines for Discussion' document (Appendix 1) for research projects be discussed before the research project is started;
- provide for scheduled supervision meetings between supervisor and candidate;
- provide for a person (usually the Chair of School or Graduate Adviser for the Programme) to be available to the candidate if s/he has problems that cannot be discussed with the supervisor(s), and have a documented process for disputes resolution;
- require the supervisor(s) to keep the Chair of School or nominee informed of any issues arising from the supervisory relationship.

5.4 Resources

Programmes should have available to candidates in handbooks or other written form, details of their policies on resources available to students undertaking research, including: space; equipment; internet and email access/other computing facilities; travel and fieldwork.

Detailed information regarding Faculty resources, such as computer facilities and funding for graduate research, can be found in the current Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences Graduate Handbook.

5.5 Responsibilities of Supervisors

The responsibilities of the supervisor(s) include the following:
- to assist the candidate to prepare a research plan which can be completed and written up within the prescribed period of study;
- to make sure ethical approval is sought for the research, where appropriate;
- to arrange for the candidate to be made familiar with the facilities and research activities of the Programme, School and Faculty;
- to encourage the candidate to play a full part in the social and intellectual life of the Programme, School and Faculty;

- to check that health and safety requirements are carried out in accordance with University and Faculty procedures and that the candidate receives any required safety training;
- to establish a timetable of regular meetings with the candidate at which all matters relating to the candidate's work can be discussed. There should be at least a monthly meeting or other formal communication (such as email) of which records are kept to make sure there is a record of the contacts between the supervisor(s) and the candidate so that the progress of supervision can be reviewed at any stage. In the event of subsequent disagreement the records of the meetings will be an important basis on which to resolve issues;
- to assist the candidate by regularly checking the records of data and observations and suggesting improvements where appropriate;
- to discuss with the candidate work accomplished and to review, and if necessary revise, the research objectives as the work proceeds in the light of progress made and other external factors (such as unexpected discoveries and newly published findings of other researchers);
- to submit to the Chair of School or nominee any reports about the candidate's progress as required;
- to advise the candidate of concern at the earliest opportunity if the candidate falls behind expected progress and to actively assist the candidate to improve;
- to advise the Chair of School or nominee if the candidate continues not to meet expected progress and to seek advice on, or assistance with, action to be taken;
- to provide constructive criticism and advice on submitted written drafts within one month or within time-frames agreed to;
- to facilitate timely completion of the candidate's study and ultimate completion of the thesis;
- to arrange (in consultation with the Chair of School or nominee) for a replacement supervisor if a sole supervisor is absent for a period exceeding four weeks;
- to recommend to the Programme the name(s) of examiner(s);
- to inform the candidate that s/he may approach the Chair of School or nominee, as appropriate, if the candidate wishes to discuss any matters related to his/her supervision.

5.6 Responsibilities of Second Supervisors

The responsibilities of a second supervisor(s) include the following:
- to enhance the effective supervision of the candidate by contributing another opinion or additional area of expertise to that of the first supervisor;
- to provide continuity of supervision in the event of the absence or departure of the first supervisor;
- to attend, as appropriate, meetings between the candidate and other supervisor(s);
- to participate in any assessment of the candidate's work;
- to arrange, in consultation with the first supervisor and the Chair of School or nominee, a replacement in the event of absences from the University for a period exceeding two months.

5.7 Responsibilities of the Candidate

The responsibilities of the candidate include the following:
- to become familiar with, and abide by, the University's regulations governing the degree and associated procedures as contained in this and other documents such as *The University of Waikato Calendar* and Faculty information;
- to apply for ethical approval for the research where appropriate;
- to carry out his/her programme of study to a high standard according to agreed research plans and within the prescribed period of study;
- not to reach agreements with outside bodies which may bind the University in any way or involve ethical or intellectual property issues without the written agreement of WaikatoLink;
- to agree to, and abide by, a timetable for at least monthly meetings or other formal communication (such as email) with the supervisor(s);
- to raise matters discussed informally with supervisors at timetabled meetings in order to confirm a common understanding and to enable recording of agreed action;
- to keep records appropriate to the standards and conventions of the discipline and to regularly submit these records for examination by the supervisor(s) so that the candidate can be assisted to maintain high standards of recording;
- to submit written thesis work for comment and discussion in accordance with agreed protocols;
- to report on their progress regularly to their supervisor(s);
- to bring any problem which may be interfering with study or research, including those of a social or medical nature, to the attention of the supervisor or the Chair of School or nominee;
- to present work or findings from time to time as agreed with the supervisor(s);
- to consult in confidence with the Chair of School or nominee if there are problems with supervision;
- to decide when to submit the thesis for examination, having taken account of

the supervisor(s)' opinion(s), and to submit the thesis for examination according to the requirements set out in University regulations and within the prescribed period of study.

5.8 Academic Support

The Faculty is dedicated to providing advice and assistance to its graduate and postgraduate students. The student's main source of academic support is their supervisor(s) and the Programme

In addition to this the Faculty has:

- an Associate Dean Graduate and Postgraduate who oversees the graduate and postgraduate culture of the faculty, including chairing the Graduate Advisers Committee; sets budget and policy; convenes the FASSGRAD Working Group or GWG; and provides workshops and advice to students at all postgraduate levels.
- a Faculty Academic Services Manager and a Faculty Graduate Support Administrator who together provide graduate and postgraduate students with both programme planning and regulatory advice and other forms of assistance or information (for instance, regarding the Faculty policy on funding student research expenses);
- Graduate Advisers in each programme area who are responsible for providing graduate and postgraduate students with academic advice in their respective area(s);
- an information board in the J Block ground floor corridor where events and activities for graduate level students and other information (for instance, regarding scholarships) can be found;
- a series of workshops, seminars, an annual interdisciplinary conference and social and networking events for graduate and postgraduate students;
- an email distribution list to which graduate and postgraduate students are subscribed so that they can be informed of any upcoming events or other activities that may interest them;

The Student Learning team also provides on line workshops and consultations to assist you in the following areas:

- identifying and clarifying research questions;
- preparation of a research proposal, literature review, abstract, conference paper or presentation;
- advice on establishing and maintaining a good working relationship with your supervisor;
- help with many aspects of research writing;
- help to overcome blocks to writing.

Note that the Student Learning team does not provide proof-reading services.

6. UNDERTAKING RESEARCH

6.1 Preparation of a Research Plan

Candidates should discuss the plan for the research with the supervisor(s) prior to enrolling. Some Programmes and/or supervisors require a brief research plan to be submitted before or reasonably early in the enrolment. Where this is required it would normally include the following minimum components:

- a statement of the research topic;
- a review of the literature;
- a statement of research questions or hypotheses;
- the methodologies by which the questions or hypotheses will be investigated;
- the forms of analysis proposed;
- the resource requirements including the impact of timing of resource availability;
- a timetable for the total project and thesis writing;
- an ethics approval statement (where relevant).

6.2 Code of Conduct for Responsible Practice in Research − General Policy

It is a basic assumption that researchers are committed to the highest standards of professional conduct in undertaking and supervising research. Researchers in this context are University staff members and research students. They all have a duty to maintain the highest standards of probity in research applicable to their discipline and to the good standing of the University.

These standards include:

- rigorous opposition to all forms of fraud, including misrepresentation and falsification of results;
- the observance of the highest standards of safety in relation to themselves, their co-workers and research participants;
- the maintenance of confidentiality and the full attribution and acknowledgement of authorship of all published material.

Researchers should participate only in work which conforms to agreed ethical standards and which they are competent to perform.

Where research that has an ethical component is conducted overseas, ethical approval must be sought both in New Zealand and overseas to ensure that any potential differences in cultural values are fully considered. This requirement applies even when the staff member or candidate is working at another institution.

Institutions and research workers have a responsibility to ensure the safety of all those associated with research. Staff should ensure that all research workers and candidates under their supervision are aware of the relevant Chair of School and policies on health and safety.

Research involving human subjects, personal information (including any personal records) or animals, must be approved by the appropriate ethics committee (see Student Research Regulations 2000 in The University of Waikato Calendar*).*

Ownership of intellectual property resulting from research is defined in the current edition of the University's policy document *Handbook for Research and Outside Professional Activities* (available from WaikatoLink, and Programme offices).

6.3 Misconduct in Research

Misconduct in research includes:
- the fabrication of data by claiming results where none have been obtained;
- the falsification of data, by changing records or falsely claiming the use of techniques, methods or levels of precision;
- plagiarism, including the direct copying of hand-written, typed, printed or published text or notation; the use of other people's data, arguments or literature reviews without appropriate acknowledgement, or permission; and the deliberate use of published or unpublished ideas from other people without adequate attribution, or permission for such use;
- misleading ascription of authorship, including listing of authors without their permission where this is relevant, attributing work to others who have not contributed to the research, and failing to acknowledge work primarily produced by a postgraduate student, trainee or associate;
- other practices that deviate from those accepted within the research community for proposing, conducting or reporting research, such as intentional infringement of the University's Code of Conduct of ethical behaviour.

Misconduct does not include honest error or honest differences in the interpretation or judgement of data.

Procedures for dealing with misconduct in research are set out in detail in the *Handbook for Research and Outside Professional Activities* (available from WaikatoLink and Programme offices).

6.4 Data Storage

If data or materials of a confidential nature are obtained by staff or research students in the course of their research, full confidentiality must be observed. The data or material must not be used for personal or commercial advantage or given to a third party for that person's commercial advantage except with the specific consent of the person or agency providing the data or material. If research is undertaken by the University under contract to an outside body, the obligations of the contract governing that research must be fully observed.

Students should consult their supervisors about any specific requirements on data storage for research involving humans. Staff and candidates are required to retain their field and laboratory notebooks and other records of their research. Practices in this regard must conform to the principles of the Privacy Act 1993. The University of Waikato requirements on archiving of data and privacy and storage of personal information are set out in clause 12 of the Ethical Conduct in Human Research and Related Activities Regulations. In addition to these regulations, when the research is the basis of an assessed piece of work such as a thesis or dissertation, then:

1. The researcher shall store data on individuals and data sets in the original form as set out in the thesis or dissertation until the University officially advises the outcome of the examination of the submitted work.
2. The researcher should continue to store data on individuals and data sets in the original form as set out in the thesis or dissertation for the duration of any appeal procedure against her or his examination results.
3. The researcher's supervisor is responsible for checking that the researcher is aware of these requirements.

6.5 Disclosure of Potential Conflict of Interest

Disclosure of any potential conflict of interest is essential for the responsible conduct of research. Such disclosure must be made to the relevant authorities, who will include a funding or sponsoring agency and the Chair of School or Director of research centre of the University. In the case of declarations to outside organisations the declaration should be made through WaikatoLink and will require the approval of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor.

7. SUBMISSION OF THESES AND DISSERTATIONS AND GRADUATION

7.1 Submission

Candidates must submit their thesis or dissertation by the required deadline (see *The University of Waikato Calendar (*http://calendar.waikato.ac.nz/)). Candidates are advised to allow sufficient time for binding their thesis or dissertation when planning to submit. We advise candidates to contact an appropriate binder early to see how much time should be allowed.

Candidates should normally agree with their supervisor(s) as to when their thesis or dissertation is ready for formal examination.

If a candidate wishes to submit a thesis or dissertation about which the supervisor(s) still has(have) significant reservations, those reservations should be fully explained to the candidate in writing. The candidate should be asked to respond in writing where the supervisor considers the thesis or dissertation is not ready for examination. A supervisor cannot prevent submission of a thesis or dissertation because of reservations about it, but the candidate is usually well advised to heed the supervisor's recommendations.

Candidates are required to submit the thesis or dissertation in a form set out in the Dissertations and Theses regulations in *The University of Waikato Calendar (*http://calendar.waikato.ac.nz/). The supervisor(s) should be informed that the thesis has been submitted.

Theses

a. *Submission requirements for students fully enrolled in a thesis **before** 1 June 2015*
   When the thesis is ready for examination, three hard bound copies must be submitted to the Assessment and Graduation Office in the Student Centre (07 838-4941). At the time of submission a digital version of the thesis also must be submitted to the University of Waikato's digital research repository, Research Commons. The student is required to sign a declaration stating that the printed and digital versions of the thesis are identical. The thesis must be submitted for examination in printed form unless the Chair of School has agreed that a part or the whole may be submitted in electronic form.

b. *Submission requirements for students fully enrolled in a thesis **after** 1 June 2015*
   When the thesis is ready for examination, two soft-bound copies must be submitted to the Assessment and Graduation Office in the Student Centre (07 838-4941). At the time of submission a digital version of the thesis also

must be submitted to the University of Waikato's digital research repository, Research Commons. The student is required to sign a declaration stating that the printed and digital versions of the thesis are identical. The thesis must be submitted for examination in printed form unless the Chair of School has agreed that a part or the whole may be submitted in electronic form.

Further information on thesis submission can be found at these links:
- Masters Theses and Dissertation Guide
- Thesis presentation
- Thesis submission
- Digital Thesis Deposit

The Assessment and Graduation Office will then notify the Programme that the thesis has been submitted and send two copies of the thesis to the Programme for examination. One copy will go to the supervisor and then, if that is Programme policy, to an internal examiner.

The Programme will send the second copy of the thesis to the external examiner together with the letter of appointment as examiner, a schedule setting out the grading system used at the University of Waikato and a copy of the Programme instructions for grading theses. Both the supervisor and the other examiners will be asked to examine the thesis and submit reports.

Requirements for binding hard copies and procedures for submission of the digital copy of a thesis are set out in the Dissertations and Theses regulations in *The University of Waikato Calendar*. Further information can be found at these links and the Thesis presentation, Thesis submission and Digital Thesis Deposit links above. :
- Masters Theses and Dissertation Guide
- Library How to Guide - Theses

Dissertations
Once the dissertation is completed it may be soft (either forced or spiral binding) or hard bound, two copies should be submitted to the Programme where their reception will be recorded. The dissertation must be submitted in printed form unless the Dean of the Faculty has agreed that a part or the whole may be submitted in electronic form.

One copy will go to the supervisor and the other to another examiner. Whether the other examiner is internal or external to the University depends on Programme policy. The second examiner should get a schedule setting out the grading system used at University of Waikato and a copy of the Programme instructions for grading dissertations. Both the supervisor and the other examiner will be asked to examine the dissertation and submit reports.

7.2 Three-week Extension

A three-week extension for either theses or dissertations beyond the submission dates specified in *The University of Waikato Calendar* can be requested in advance by writing to the Associate Dean Graduate and Postgraduate. The reason for the extension must be given and the supervisor(s) should indicate their support for the request either in a separate memo or by endorsing the candidate's letter.

Further extensions (without re-enrolling) are granted only in exceptional circumstances. The application, including detailed documentation of the circumstances, should be made to the Faculty Graduate Support Administrator who will forward these to the Associate Dean Graduate and Postgraduate and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor.

7.3 Enrolment Status

The student must be enrolled in the degree at the time of submission of the thesis or dissertation.

7.4 Graduation

If a student wishes to attend the graduation ceremony immediately following the submission of their thesis or dissertation, then the student or candidate must time the submission to allow this. Three months can be expected to elapse between the submission and a decision on the award of the degree. External examiners are given two months to mark a thesis or dissertation. Often examiners are able to mark a thesis or dissertation in a much shorter period of time but this should not be relied upon. Examiners are not paid for marking Masters theses and dissertations and their efforts are a courtesy they extend to the University. Consequently, it is inappropriate to expect the examiner to put off everything else he or she is doing to mark a thesis.

To ensure that there is sufficient time for the candidate's name to appear in the printed list of graduates for a graduation ceremony, the final grade must be notified to the registry by a pre-determined date, normally around six weeks, before each ceremony. For the A semester ceremony, students should aim to submit theses or dissertations no later than the end of December to have some confidence that they will be able to receive their degree at that graduation ceremony.

Even with this date, given the closures over the Christmas period and the fact many academics take their annual leave over this period, it is unlikely the grade

will be available until March. The later it is submitted, the less likely it is that the candidate will be able to graduate at the A semester ceremony.

7.5 Examination Results

When the results of the examination have been lodged by the Programme with the Assessment and Graduation Office, the student will be informed of the result by letter and his/her academic record will be updated to include the results by Academic Services. The Programme's graduate information should outline the Programme's policy on student access to the examiner's report. Once the grade is entered a student may ask the Programme for copies of these reports. Some Programmes send examiners' reports out to the student automatically.

7.6 Marks and Grades for Masters Degrees

Where the degree also contains taught papers, the average for the programme as a whole will be calculated with regard to the weightings of the papers and the thesis or dissertation. The class of honours can be arrived at from the following table. For the purpose of determining the class of honours, the average is calculated without rounding.

Weighted Average Mark	Class of Honours
75% average or higher	First Class Honours
Average of 68%-74%	Second Class, Division I
Average of 60%-67%	Second Class, Division II
50%-59%	Pass
49% or below	Fail

7.7 Deposit of Theses and Dissertations after Examination

Theses
After examination the copies of the thesis will be returned to the Programme by the examiner(s). When the degree has been awarded, one copy of the thesis may become the property of the Programme which provided primary supervision.. One copy of the thesis will be lodged with the University Library. The digital copy of the thesis will be lodged in the University's digital repository. Candidates will be reimbursed, upon application, by the Faculty for the cost of photocopying and binding two copies of the thesis. Candidates may wish to offer their supervisor(s) a personal copy and arrange copies for personal use.

If the candidate is required to produce additional copies of the thesis, as for example when the research has been supervised by staff within two Programmes,

they may apply to the Faculty for reimbursement of the marginal cost of producing the additional copy or copies.

Dissertations
After examination the copies of the dissertation will be returned to the Programme by the examiners. When the degree has been awarded, both copies of the dissertation will become the property of the Programme which provided primary supervision. Candidates may wish to offer their supervisor(s) a personal copy and arrange copies for personal use.

If the candidate is required to produce additional copies of the dissertation, as for example when the research has been supervised by staff within two Programmes, they may apply to the Faculty for reimbursement of the marginal cost of producing the additional copy or copies.

8. EXAMINATION OF MASTERS THESES AND DISSERTATIONS

8.1 Responsibility for the Process of Examination

The process of examination will be overseen by the Chair of School, who becomes Chief Examiner for the Programmes of study within that school, or his or her nominee (normally the Graduate Adviser of the administrative Programme).

8.2 Appointment of Examiner(s) for Masters Theses and Dissertations

In consultation with the Chair of School or nominee (normally the Programme Graduate Adviser), the supervisor(s) will nominate at least one examiner external to the University who is active in the research field of the thesis; and one examiner internal to the University with a good grounding in the research field who is not directly connected to the student, their thesis research, or their supervision. If such an internal examiner cannot be identified, two external examiners should be used. Both examiners will normally hold at least a Masters degree or have equivalent qualifications or experience (see section 8.3).

The thesis supervisor(s) will write a statement outlining the context under which the thesis was completed, noting any academic or personal challenges experienced by the student which impacted on the thesis research and writing, the involvement of external organizations in commissioning and/or overseeing the research, and the student's ability to take on board advice from supervisors. The examiners will be told the topic area of the thesis or dissertation and the potential length when asked to examine the thesis or dissertation. Their ability to examine within the suggested time of no longer than two months of receipt of the thesis or dissertation will be checked.

In some cases Programmes may have arrangements with another University's Department in the same discipline and that Department may select which of their members is to be the external examiner. In these cases there will always be at least one internal examiner.

For theses, at least one of the examiners shall be external to the University and shall not be directly connected with the candidate or their research. *This will normally be the case for dissertations also.* However, in some areas it may be necessary to extend the pool of potential examiners for dissertations by using an external examiner who is external to the Programme but within the University. In rare exceptions, it may be necessary to appoint an examiner within the Programme. In both cases, this examiner must not be connected directly with the candidate or their research.

The examiners will make independent reports on the work.

8.3 Selection of Examiners

All examiners will be senior in experience to the candidate and will normally be associated with an academic institution and teaching and researching in the discipline relevant to the research or be eminent and widely respected specialists in their fields, with relevant publications. They should normally hold at least a Masters degree or have equivalent qualifications or experience and be actively involved in scholarship and research in a field relevant to the topic of the thesis.

A person nominated as an examiner for the work should not normally be:
- an intimate friend or relative of the candidate or of any of the supervisors;
- associated with any organisation contractually involved with the research covered by the thesis;
- inactive in the field of study covered by the thesis.

8.4 The Role of the Supervisor(s) in the Examination Process

The role of the supervisor(s) in the examination process may differ across Programmes and disciplines. Their role should be clearly set out in Programme information and normally includes providing a written report containing such matters as:
- confirmation that the work presented in the thesis is that of the candidate and that any contribution from another person has been properly identified by the candidate;
- any factors which may have influenced the work of the candidate;
- brief comments on the candidate's performance, the quality of the thesis and the supervision process.

Supervisor(s) do not examine the thesis or dissertation.. If there is more than one internal examiner, it is the preference that ONE joint report and grade is provided by them after a discussion about the grade to avoid the potential dilution of the external grade assessment.

8.5 Examination Process

The details of the examination process in each Programme should be documented and available to the candidate.

Each examiner is required to write an independent report on the thesis or dissertation and to make a recommendation of a grade.

The examiners write their reports in the strictest confidence and may not confer with other examiners or with the supervisors.

Neither the thesis nor dissertation, nor any part of them, should be given to any other persons for any purposes whatsoever before the examination process is complete. Examiners may, however, confer on a strictly confidential basis with qualified colleagues about aspects of the thesis.

Reports can vary from a few pages to a lengthy statement. The content and nature of the report will vary according to the nature of the thesis, conventions relevant to the appropriate disciplines, and to the concerns that the examiners may have about the content of the thesis.

Examiners are generally asked to make comments on the following (although this may differ across disciplines):
- the candidate shows appropriate familiarity with, and understanding of, the relevant literature;
- the thesis or dissertation clearly sets out a research aim, hypothesis or initial intention;
- the thesis or dissertation provides a study of the topic appropriate for Masters level;
- the research methodologies are appropriate and adequate for the subject matter and are properly applied;
- the research findings are suitably analysed, set out, and accompanied by adequate exposition;
- the quality of the language expression, and general presentation of the thesis is satisfactory;
- the thesis or dissertation as a whole makes an appropriate contribution to the knowledge of the subject with which it deals and shows that the candidate understands the relationship between the content of the thesis and the wider context of knowledge to which it belongs;
- there are any parts of the thesis which, in the opinion of the examiners, are worthy of being the basis of a publication.

8.6 Criteria for Judging and Awarding Marks for Masters Theses and Dissertations

1. Candidates for Masters degrees are expected to demonstrate an ability to undertake an appropriate size research project and to evaluate research critically. Research at this level may involve an original research project, well founded in the relevant literature, or an appropriate replication and extension of other work, also selected on the basis of the relevant literature. For the research to be judged excellent the presentation should be excellent and appropriate for the discipline, sound analyses should have been carried out where appropriate, and there should be good integration of the candidate's work with that in the literature.

The difference between a thesis and dissertation is solely in the size and scope of the research. A four-paper thesis is the equivalent of one full academic year's work. A three-paper thesis is the equivalent of three-quarters of a year's full-time work. A two-paper dissertation is the equivalent of half a year's full-time work.

2. Where appropriate, the thesis or dissertation should contain a critical review of the literature on the subject that leads clearly into the aims and the objectives of the research. Where relevant, the materials and methods used should be set out in sufficient detail so that the work could be repeated by another person. Tables, graphs and figures should be well presented, accurate and concise and suitable techniques used to evaluate the results. Conclusions should be clear and precise. Where appropriate, a final discussion should be included, covering the present results, their relation to previous work, and future investigations.

3. The thesis or dissertation should contain information, which contributes to the sum of knowledge or technical procedures on the subject studied and provides new understanding of the subject with which it deals.

4. The thesis or dissertation should be clear, accurate, cogent, and concise. It is to be free of typographical errors, errors of spelling or language construction.

5. In scientific work, units of measure should conform to the International System of Units (SI) unless there are clear reasons for not doing so.

6. The work should be suitably documented and citations correct in every detail. Although there is no prescribed standard method of setting out a reference list, the method adopted should be uniform throughout. Many Programmes prescribe a set layout and referencing style, e.g., History nominates MHRA and Psychology nominates APA format. Refer also to the University Library guides on the preparation of thesis and dissertations: Referencing, Thesis Preparation.

8.7 Assessing the Thesis or Dissertation

Examiners, in assessing a thesis or dissertation, will not give equal weight to each of the criteria specified above. Greatest significance will be given to the quality of the research done, and, where relevant, to the integrity of the methodology used and the candidate's ability to evaluate their own research critically in the context of the relevant literature.

Presentational aspects will be of secondary importance but poor presentation will result in a lower mark. Candidates presenting theses or dissertations significantly in excess of the recommended length should note that examiners may give a lower mark if the greater length detracts from the overall quality of the presentation. In exceptional circumstances the Chair of School may give permission for the word limit to be exceeded, except where they are the supervisor. When this is done it should be documented and the examiners should be advised.

8.8 Marks for Masters Theses and Dissertations

1. Having assessed a thesis or dissertation, an examiner will allocate a mark in accordance with the marking bands below. An examiner may recommend an exact mark or a band. If an examiner recommends a band rather than an actual mark the thesis or dissertation will be allocated the middle mark for that band.

Band	Grade	Mark Range
Band 1:	A+ up	90 to 100
Band 2:	A- to A	80-89
Band 3:	mid B to top B+	72-79
Band 4:	B- to mid B	65-74
Band 5:	C to top C+	50-64
Band 6:	below C	0 to 49

2. To assist examiners to place a thesis or dissertation in a band, the following descriptors are provided. These attempt to describe work falling in the middle of each band; significantly better or worse performance in one or more criteria could result in an examiner submitting a higher or lower mark in the grade than the middle. These are presented as a guide and are not intended to prescribe the assessment method(s) the examiner may wish to use.

Band 1 A thesis or dissertation in this band represents both excellent research and presentation. All criteria (Sections 8.6, 1 to 6) have been met and there is little that could be done to improve the work.

For the higher marks in this band there should be little or no room for improvement.

Band 2 The research criteria (Sections 8.6, 1 to 3) have all been met. There are very few presentation errors.

Band 3 The research criteria (Sections 8.6, 1 to 3) have largely been met but there are some inadequacies in meeting other criteria (Sections 8.6, 4 to 6). There may be some presentational errors.

Band 4 The criteria (Sections 8.6, 1 to 6) have generally been met but there are errors of significant inadequacies that have not been addressed in the thesis, in one or more of:

- the research carried out;
- the techniques used;
- the analysis(es) performed;
- the interpretation of results or the conclusions drawn;
- some presentational matters where there are inadequacies requiring correction.

Band 5 The research criteria have barely been met or there are some significant inadequacies that detract from the research done or the conclusions reached. There may be significant presentational inadequacies.

Band 6 The criteria (Sections 8.6, 1 to 6) have not been met or, if some have been met, there are significant research and presentational problems that detract from the worth of the research.

3. In determining a mark within a band, an examiner has the discretion to award towards the higher end of the range when a thesis or dissertation contains features that, while not lifting it to a higher band, nevertheless enhance it in some academic or presentational way. Conversely an examiner also has the discretion to award towards the lower end of the band if some aspects detract from it as a piece of research, e.g., undue length or typographical errors that cause confusion.

8.9 Examiners' Reports

The supervisor and examiners are required to supply to the Chair of School or Programme Graduate Adviser separate, independent reports on the thesis. These reports will address the criteria for judging a thesis and will include recommended grades. No examiner may read any other examiner's report until they have submitted their own examination reports.

In reporting on the thesis or dissertation it is expected that an examiner will provide written comments as to the research in general.

The Faculty and the University consider these reports, particularly those of external examiners, to be very valuable academic and professional feedback for students. This report will normally be made available to the student after the examination is completed. The external examiner will be asked, when asked to examine the thesis, to give permission for his/her report to be released to the student at this time. The recommended grade will not, however, be released.

When the examination is complete, the examiners will report to the Chair of School or the Programme Graduate Adviser. The final mark will be determined, having regard for all of the marks and reports (see Section 8.10). All reports will be presented to the Dean together with an outline of reasons for the allocation of the suggested final mark.

8.10 Final Grade Recommendation

Once the examination reports have been received, the Chair of School or nominee (normally the Programme Graduate Adviser) will check them and make a decision on the final grade, taking into the account all reports and suggested grades, as well as the statement from the supervisor(s).

Where the examiners reports are within a 10 per cent range of each other, it is suggested that an average grade be awarded. However, in keeping with best international practice, somewhat greater weight may be given to the external examiner's report. When the grades awarded by each examiner are more than 10 per cent apart, the examiners should be consulted in an effort to identify a common grade. If a compromise cannot be reached, the thesis should be send out to a third examiner external to the University.

The final grade for the degree and class of Honours will be assessed as outlined in Section 7.6.

8.10.1 Resolution of Minor Differences between Examiners

If the suggested marks submitted by all examiners cover a range greater than 11 or if at least one mark is below Band 6 and at least one other is above Band 6, then these marks need to be discussed further. The Chair of School, as Chief Examiner, or his or her nominee the Graduate Adviser, will initiate a clarification process with examiners to see if a mark adjustment might resolve the dispute without additional examination.

This is not a negotiation exercise and examiners are under no obligation to revise their marks. In conducting the exercise, the Chair of School or the Programme Graduate Adviser will:

- read all reports and look for any inconsistencies between comments and marks;
- talk with each examiner in turn, summarising the particular issues arising from that person's report and ask how he or she feels about his or her mark in the light of the mark recommended and any comments made by the others;
- accept any changes that an examiner wants to make and, if these bring the span of marks to less than 11, allocate the average mark.

Where changes are not possible the dispute needs to be treated as a major dispute.

Note: any examiner who feels that the clarification exercise is inappropriate may request to the Chair of School or nominee that the matter should be treated as a major dispute.

8.10.2 Major Disputes

When there is no resolution for a mark discrepancy then the thesis or dissertation may be referred to a third person who is an independent and disinterested party with recognised competence in the field being examined. Normally the person selected as referee will be a senior researcher who has recognised competence in the relevant discipline. This referee will be provided with a copy of the thesis and the reports of the examiners and the supervisors. S/he will be asked to recommend a grade on the basis of their assessment of the information provided. Where a dissertation has not gone to an examiner external to the University the referee shall be external to the University.

The procedure this referee will be asked to follow will be to mark the thesis using the standard marking guidelines and then to make comments on the marks and reports of the earlier examiners. They will provide a recommended mark or marking band.

When the examination is complete, this additional examiner will report to the Chair of School or the Programme Graduate Adviser. All such reports will be discussed with the Dean or nominee and the final mark will be determined, having regard for all of the marks and reports.

8.11 Unsatisfactory Theses or Dissertations

If the final result is that the thesis or dissertation fails (i.e., gets a final grade of less than 50%) the thesis will be returned to the candidate and they will normally be deemed to have failed the degree.

Resubmission.
The *Personal Programmes of Study Regulations Governing Graduate Degrees* (sections 24–28) state:

- A dissertation or thesis that receives a narrow fail may be returned to the student with the opportunity to revise and re-submit. The decision to offer such an opportunity is at the discretion of the Dean of the Faculty/School, and is based on a number of factors, including the likelihood that the revision will be successful, and the availability of suitable supervisors and examiners.
- An offer by the Dean under section 24 of these regulations will be in writing and any conditions attached to the offer will be made explicit. The period allowed for the revision will be no more than the equivalent of one semester and the deadline for submission will be prescribed. If the offer to revise and re-submit is accepted, the student will be eligible to receive a maximum grade of C, and in the case of a masters degree, will not be eligible for the award of honours.
- A student's acceptance of an offer to revise and re-submit and associated conditions must be made in writing. The student must then re-enrol for the equivalent of one semester and pay fees accordingly. For administrative and fees purposes, the student will enrol for the particular enrolment period in which the deadline for re-submission falls.
- A 'provisional fail' is recorded against the first dissertation/thesis enrolment for the period of revision. The 'provisional fail' grade is replaced by a final grade (either a fail grade or a C grade, depending on the outcome), after the revision and re-examination processes are concluded.
- The opportunity to revise and re-submit a particular dissertation or thesis may be offered to a student only once.

8.12 Publication and Authorship

It is neither desirable nor practical for the University to supervise the creation of books, papers or articles arising out of the thesis. It is University policy that staff and students are the owners of the papers and books that they create and publish. Staff and research students will therefore have the legal liability for ensuring that copyright and intellectual property requirements are met.

It is also important that all authors listed on a publication shall have contributed in a significant way to the work. The principal author is responsible for the entire publication and should ensure that all other authors accept, in writing, responsibility either for the entire paper or for that part of it with which they were concerned.

The authors of publications must acknowledge any assistance and support of any funding body, and do so in the form which is required by that funding body.

The submission to several journals of papers, articles or abstracts containing similar data or material must be properly declared to the publishers of the journals, or other publications which are subsequent to the primary publication.

9. RESOLUTION OF PROBLEMS

9.1 Complaints

The University operates on the principle that issues of concern to a student should be taken up initially with the person directly concerned in an attempt to resolve the matter informally first. If that fails, or for any reason it is inappropriate to approach the person directly concerned, then the matter should be referred to the manager responsible for the area involved such as the Chair of School or Administration Manager.

Further information on the University's policy on concerns and complaints is available in a brochure obtainable from the Faculty or Programme. This process should be used for any issues related to the Programme, School, Faculty, or other Division of the University.

9.1.1 Waikato Student Union Advocacy Helpdesk

Members of the Waikato Student Union have the option of using a free advocacy service through this organisation. The service is a free and confidential service provided independently of the University and puts students' interests first.

The Advocacy Service aims to help students with whatever concerns they wish to bring forward such as academic, accommodation, consumer/legal, financial, personal and general matters. An advocate listens to student clients and helps him/her/them sort out what they wish to do.

The advocates have all been, or are still, students themselves. They have received in-depth training and have contact networks within both the University and surrounding organisations that mean they can genuinely help students. Even if your issue is outside what they normally deal with, they will direct you on to whoever else you might need to get it sorted.

To make an appointment with an advocate either book online at http://wsu.org.nz/services/ or call at WSU reception in the Student Union Building on the Hamilton campus; phone WSU reception on Hamilton 856 9139 or on the University extension 4149; or free call from University phones in Hamilton and Tauranga.

For further information http://wsu.org.nz/services/

9.2 Appeals

The University of Waikato Calendar (http://calendar.waikato.ac.nz) outlines the Appeals processes for the University.

9.3 Harassment

Harassment involves the improper use of power, either personal or institutional, by one person over another. It can also involve interference in the pursuit of work, study or the proper enjoyment of University amenities by offensive or unwarranted attention from any member of the University community to another.

Details of what constitutes harassment and procedures to follow to lodge complaints are contained in a brochure available from the Student and Academic Services Division (SASD) at the Gateway (Te Kuaha), the Student Counselling Service (phone 07 838 4201), or Waikato Student Union (phone 07 856 9139).

10. APPENDIX

BEGINNING SUPERVISION: GUIDELINES FOR DISCUSSION

10.1 Introduction

These guidelines are designed to be used in an early discussion between the supervisor and the graduate student. They are based on the assumption that there are some basic issues which underpin effective supervision and the belief that by discussing these issues the foundations are laid for a good working relationship. Different aspects may need to be negotiated during the process.

In preparing these guidelines it was envisaged that both student and supervisor would respond to the issues below. One of the main objectives of this process is to share understandings so that there is agreement over fundamental (and often mistakenly assumed) beliefs and expectations. It is suggested that the answers to these questions be prepared and that a copy is made of the completed document for each party.

Personal issues have been put first because they are the most immediate to the supervision process. Programme- and University-level issues that are also relevant are then listed.

Important note: If there are two or more supervisors, it is suggested that this document be negotiated amongst all parties.

10.2 Statement of Supervisor/Candidate Understandings

1. What is a thesis or dissertation?
- What does "thesis" or "dissertation" mean?
- What form and purposes does the research plan have?
- What is the appropriate structure of a thesis or dissertation?
- What is the appropriate length?
- What referencing conventions should I follow?
- What is the difference between a thesis or dissertation that is likely to fail and one that is likely to pass?
- Some titles of good theses or dissertations in this field?
- Who owns papers arising during and after thesis supervision?
- Are there any confidentiality, intellectual property or conflict of interest matters involved?

2   Meetings
- Frequency and duration of meetings?
- Access to supervisor outside of scheduled meeting times?
- Protocol if one person cannot attend a meeting?

3   Advice and Support
- How much input can be expected from the supervisor, how will this proceed?
- Expectations of feedback: how much, how often, in what form, with how much notice?
- How long will feedback on thesis material or other submitted work take? (Note that it is expected that this will take no longer than four weeks.)
- Support with theoretical content e.g., resources, contacts. How much can be expected, given the supervisor's knowledge of the area?
- What other kinds of knowledge are needed e.g., of the research process, of academic writing etc — what resources does the supervisor know of, how much help can s/he give?
- Are there relevant personal circumstances that might make the supervision or completion of the thesis difficult e.g., candidate suffering financial hardship or experiencing relationship difficulties, or a supervisor going on sabbatical, expecting a baby, etc.

4   Time Frame
- How long should the different stages take to complete?
- What would be a realistic completion date for each component?

5   Joint Supervisors
- What roles will be taken by each supervisor, i.e., by the first and second supervisors or by the co-supervisors?
- If there is disagreement about methods etc. between supervisors, how is this to be resolved?

6   Other issues relating to supervisor/candidate understandings

10.3 Programme Expectations and Resources

1. **Written Information**
   - What Programme or School handbooks or other documents are relevant for graduate students?

2. **What access does the candidate have to**
   - A study place, pigeon-hole etc?
   - Paid work, e.g., tutoring?
   - Computers?
   - Funding/research grants? If available, how do I apply? When are the deadlines? Who can I contact for more information?
   - Support services, e.g., technical?

3. **What expectations does the Programme have of the candidate?**
   - Seminar presentation of thesis in progress?
   - What else?

4. **Monitoring supervision, resolving conflict**
   - What are the Programme procedures for monitoring the supervision in the event that one of us is not happy with its progress?

5. **Other Programme issues**

10.4 University Requirements

1. **University guidelines**
   - What University documents are available on supervision? (*e.g., The University of Waikato Calendar*, this Handbook, Programme material*)*

2. **Clarification of thesis examination**
   - How is the examination of the thesis conducted?
   - Who will be the external examiner? When is this decided?

3. **Extensions**
   - What are the protocols for extensions?

4. **University protocols**
   - What University channels are available in the event that one of us is not happy with the progress of the supervision and the Programme cannot or is inappropriate to resolve this?

5. **Ethics**
- What ethical issues need to be considered in the research project?
- Does the candidate need to apply for consent from an appropriate School/Faculty or University committee?
- What is the process for submitting a proposal for ethical review?