

University of Pretoria

Philosophy Department

Master's and Doctoral
Student Handbook 2022

Table of Contents

TERMINOLOGY PERTAINING TO MASTER'S AND DOCTORAL STUDY, INCLUDING REGISTRATION	2
STRUCTURE OF PROGRAMMES	2
MAJOR PHASES OF MASTER'S AND DOCTORAL STUDIES	3
REFERENCING	7
RESPONSIBILITIES OF POST-GRADUATE STUDENTS	8
FUNDING	9
REQUESTING LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION	9
GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE	11
POLICY DOCUMENTS	12

TERMINOLOGY PERTAINING TO MASTER'S AND DOCTORAL STUDY, INCLUDING REGISTRATION

- The research submitted by an Mphil or MA by coursework candidate is called a 'minor dissertation'. The research submitted by an MA by research only (no coursework) candidate is called a 'dissertation'. The research submitted by a PhD candidate is referred to as a 'thesis'.
- The person acting as the supervisor for a candidate enrolled for a minor dissertation, dissertation or a doctoral thesis is called a 'supervisor'. The term 'promoter' is no longer used.
- The non-examining chair is a (senior) staff member in the department, normally the Head, who coordinates the examination procedure for the minor dissertation, dissertation, or thesis. The point is to remove the supervisor from the assessment process.
- Formal entrance into a degree programme is called 'admission', while permission to take advantage of that opportunity is known as 'registration'. *Students must register at the beginning of every year*, which normally requires a fee (R7500 for South African students in 2022). Students might not be allowed to register if their performance is unsatisfactory or if they have not paid the relevant fee. Students are encouraged to register by 15 February each year, even if the last possible date to do so is later than that.

STRUCTURE OF PROGRAMMES

Structure of the Research Master's Degree (Coursework Master's Degree expected only in 2024)

- A Master's programme is on NQF level 9 and has a minimum credit value of 180. The official duration for a Master's programme is one year, but two years is normal.

- The output of a Master's by research only programme is a dissertation on a selected topic. The length of a dissertation is approximately 30 000 – 36 000 words.
- A Master's candidate must prepare and normally should submit an article to an accredited journal for possible publication.
- Study is meant to be full-time—there are no part-time studies for the Master's in Philosophy at UP.

Structure of the Doctoral Degree

- A Doctoral programme is on NQF level 10 and has a minimum credit value of 360. The official duration for a Doctoral programme is two years, but three years is normal.
- The output of a Doctoral programme comprises a thesis on a selected topic. The length of a thesis is approximately 60 000 – 90 000 words, depending on the topic and expectations of the supervisor and Department.
- Currently, an oral examination (*viva voce*), beyond passing recommendations from the examiners, is normally required to graduate.
- A Doctoral candidate must also prepare and submit at least one article to an accredited journal for possible publication, in order to be able to graduate. Proof of submission is required, although acceptance by the journal is not.
- Study is meant to be full-time—there are no part-time studies for the PhD in Philosophy at UP.

MAJOR PHASES OF MASTER'S AND DOCTORAL STUDIES

For an overview of the phases of postgraduate study, see the chart that the Library has provided at its Research Guide Home [here](#). This webpage has a variety of other useful information for postgrads.

The Initiation Phase

- A supervisor must be allocated to a student by the end of the first three (3) months after registration at the latest, and both the student and supervisor must complete the 'University's Memorandum of Agreement' form. (NB: ethics clearance, which must be obtained for all research proposals, requires submission of this form.)
- Supervisors must be formally appointed with an 'Appointment of Supervisors' form submitted to the Faculty.
- Students should acquire the Department's 'Research Proposal Template' form from their supervisor or the Postgraduate Coordinator. The supervisor should provide advice about how to complete it as well as about technical requirements pertaining to academic writing and referencing.

- As noted above, students must formally register for the degree *each year* to qualify for research supervision. Registration fees in 2022 were approximately R7500 for South Africans. A bursary may or may not be available from the Faculty, Department, or supervisor. (See the Funding section below.)

The Proposal Phase

- Master's students have at most six (6) and Doctoral students nine (9) months from the beginning of the first year to complete their project proposals to the standards required by the Faculty and University policy. Students are encouraged to complete the proposal much sooner than this, to allow for extra time for revisions and, if the proposal is accepted early, during which to write.
- Research proposals need to be formally approved by the Department in terms of their quality. Normally students present their proposal at the start or end of a Departmental meeting of permanent staff (along with an external reader in the case of Doctoral proposals), having shared a draft of the proposal about a week ahead of the presentation. Students speak to central aspects of the proposal for about 5-10 minutes, after which staff (and the reader in the case of Doctorates) engage with questions or suggestions. Supposing the basics of the proposal are approved, students then revise in the light of comments received.
- The Department has set down a 'Guidelines for the Evaluation of Research Proposals' form, a document indicating which decisions are possible in respect of proposals and what they mean, distinguishing between, say, minor and major revisions.
- Research proposals are next submitted to the Faculty online ('Research Grants and Ethics' at MyTuks) for approval in terms of research ethics—and that is unfortunately true even if the study is purely text-based. Technically a study may not proceed until such clearance has been obtained. (NB: the 'Nomination of Examiners' form requires provision of the ethics protocol number, meaning your work cannot be examined without one.)

The Study Phase

- Supervisors are expected to provide feedback within approximately two (2) weeks, and students are expected to complete the revisions within about three to four (3-4) weeks.
- Although there is no formal requirement about how often to correspond or meet with a supervisor, it would be unusual if there were no contact at all for more than a month.
- Students are expected to present their research to the Department at least once a year during what is presently called a 'Research Symposium'.
- Supervisors will report periodically on the progress of each student at Departmental meetings and, once formally appointed, will record milestones on the UP online system.
- Students are expected to participate in the intellectual life of the Department, eg, by attending colloquia and asking questions, organizing reading groups, requesting enrichment

seminars, helping with undergraduate or Honours student projects, and being part of the departmental tutoring staff.

- Students should keep in mind that, when hiring, academic departments look for qualifications pertaining not merely to research, but also teaching and administration. Ensure your academic training is well rounded during your studies—speak to your supervisor or the Postgraduate Coordinator for advice.
- MA students officially have only one year to complete their study, but are allowed to register for a second year without having to apply for an extension; in their third year they will have a block on their registration which can only be lifted by submitting the following to their supervisor who submits to the Faculty: a) the extension of study period application form, b) a newly signed MoA with an updated time schedule, c) a motivation letter drafted by the student and signed by the student and the supervisor which also includes the updated time schedule. PhD students officially have only two years to complete their study, but they are allowed to register for a third year without having to apply for an extension; in their fourth year they will have a block on their registration which can only be lifted if they submit the above documents to their supervisor. There is no guarantee of extension, and indicating that a job prevented you from undertaking your research would be received unfavourably by the Deanery.

The Assessment Phase

- The supervisor neither marks a dissertation/thesis, nor participates in the examination process. Instead, a non-examining chair is appointed to oversee the process, and two (for the M) or three (for the D) examiners with some professional and personal distance from the supervisor and student are appointed. A Doctorate must include at least one international examiner and should often include more than one.
- About six (6) months before expecting to submit, the supervisor proposes examiners to the Head. Supposing they're approved, the supervisor invites them in writing, indicating that a written report and participation in an oral defence would be required and offering the relevant payment (apparently only R3500 for examining a Doctorate!). Once the relevant number of qualified persons have agreed, the supervisor submits the 'Nomination of Examiners' form to the Faculty (dorcasmokalapa@up.ac.za and pghumanities@up.ac.za) and the Head.
- At least three (3) months before the student plans to submit, the student completes the 'Notice to Submit' form. This form and many others are included in the Humanities Postgraduate Guide, available [here](#), or from the Postgraduate Coordinator. This is also the last opportunity to revise the title of the dissertation/thesis, done via the 'Recommendation Regarding Titles' form—which should happen before the 'Notice to Submit' form is completed.
- Work must be submitted for examination by 31 August to qualify for the autumn graduation ceremony in April the following year. Late submissions will be certified/signed by the student and might cause graduation to be moved to the following ceremony. In addition, a re-registration for the next academic year may be required.

- When the dissertation or thesis is complete, the student and supervisor sign the 'Submission' form to release the study for assessment purposes. Students normally may not submit their dissertation/thesis without the supervisor's consent.
- The candidate submits the required number of copies for assessment, if hardcopies are desired, and in the format required.
- The dissertation or thesis must include an integrity statement from the student declaring that this is original work and that ideas/words imported from others are properly acknowledged/referenced. The dissertation or thesis must also include an ethics statement. More generally, here are the requirements and in the correct order for a research project to be examined:

1. Title page
2. Acknowledgement
3. Declaration*
4. Ethics Statement*
5. Abstract and Keywords
6. Table of Contents

*For submission after the examining phase, these documents are not bound into the final or 'luxury' copy of the thesis/dissertation, but are submitted loose/separately.

- For specific instructions, eg in respect of the plagiarism/integrity declaration, see the 'Preparation and Submission of the Thesis' section in the University's 'General Academic Regulations', or consult previous theses/dissertations submitted.
- All mini-dissertations, dissertations, and theses must be submitted to Turn-it-in, a plagiarism detection software, and the report must be included when the submission is given to the supervisor.
- The examination process can easily take six (6) weeks and often takes longer. During this time, the student should be writing up an article for submission to an accredited journal in consultation with the supervisor and preparing for the next stage of the student's (academic) career.
- Typically the following would be submitted to the Faculty (dorcas.mokalapa@up.ac.za and pghumanities@up.ac.za) by the supervisor or non-examining chair as part of the examination of a PhD:
 1. The non-examining chair's report.
 2. The reports from the examiners.
 3. The viva form signed by all relevant parties.
 4. The 'Consolidated Report' form signed by all relevant parties.
 5. The submitted article, ideally with proof of submission.
 6. The final thesis, which includes revisions.
 7. A report from the student attesting to revisions made in the light of examiner comments.
 8. The citation/laudatio.
- Here are the requirements and in the correct order for the final version of research project to be submitted to the Faculty:

1. Title page
2. Acknowledgement
3. Abstract and Keywords
4. Table of Contents

NB: the integrity/plagiarism declaration and ethics statement are also submitted, but loosely as separate documents.

- Once the Faculty is happy with those materials, and there has been approval of the degree, the student uploads his/her dissertation or thesis to UPspace, with instructions [here](#).
- Finally, after approval of the degree, the student submits to the Faculty (Nombulelo.maphanga@up.ac.za) the following documents:
 1. UPSpace submission form.
 2. UPSpace proof of submission (screenshot).
 3. The ethics declaration.
 4. The plagiarism form.
 5. The submitted article, with proof of submission.
 6. The final thesis in both Word and PDF versions.
 7. The report on revisions made to the thesis.

REFERENCING

The Department does not have a standard referencing format that it requires its students to use, and nor does the University have one required for research projects to be examined. The most important thing is to *be consistent* about whichever style you employ, while being sure to *alphabetize* according to surname and *provide the bibliographic information that is conventionally expected*.

Below is a bare-bones version of the Chicago Author/Date referencing style, which many philosophy supervisors in the Department (and around the world) would find acceptable.

- **Book format:** Surname, First Name. Year. *Title of Book in Italics and Title Case*. City of Publication: Name of Publisher. **EG:** Zenk, Gabriel. 2009. *Why Cats Are Better than Dogs*. Johannesburg: The Best Press.
- **Chapter format:** Surname, First Name. Year. 'Title of Chapter in Quotation Marks and Title Case'. In *Title of Book in Italics and Title Case*, edited by First Name Surname, pp–pp. City of Publication: Name of Publisher. **EG:** Mokoena, Lerato. 2011. 'Why Zenk Is Wrong about Cats'. In *Cats Versus Dogs: A Sourcebook*, edited by Lungisa Dube, 23–56. Pietermaritzburg: Wisdom Publishers.
- **Article format:** Surname, First Name. Year. 'Title of Article in Quotation Marks and Title Case'. *Title of Journal in Italics and Title Case* Volume number: pp–pp. **EG:** Ndlovu, Thando. 2013. 'Barking up the Wrong Tree: Defending Zenk from Mokoena'. *International Journal for the Liking of Beasts* 12: 87–100.

- **Website format:** Surname, First Name. Year. 'Title of Article in Quotation Marks and Title Case'. *Title of Website in Italics and Title Case*, URL. **EG:** Taringa, Tafadzwa. 2015. 'Preferring a Purr to a Bark'. *The Philosophical Pet Forum*, <http://www.philpetforum.net>.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF POST-GRADUATE STUDENTS

- Completion of the post-graduate degree is the primary responsibility of a post-graduate student. Any other commitments, whether work related, such as tutorial or teaching duties, and/or academic endeavours, such as conference participation or publications plans, are taken on subject to the condition that the primary responsibility to complete studies is met.
- Students may not undertake another degree while enrolled for a post-graduate degree with UP Philosophy.
- The active participation in writing workshops, seminars, and colloquia is considered part and parcel of a post-graduate student's core duties. Only in exceptional circumstances will permission be granted to be excused from these events.
- No publication – whether in an academic journal or any other printed or electronic medium such as a newspaper – may be done in the name of the Department of Philosophy or the University of Pretoria without the written consent of the Head of Department or that person's delegated substitute. All publications should specify the Department of Philosophy at UP as the main affiliation, if the research for them was produced while a student registered in it.
- Students must discuss all research related endeavours they undertake while registered at the Department of Philosophy with their supervisors. Their public work reflects on the Department, and so it is reasonable for staff to want to vet it.
- Students have a duty to check their email regularly, ideally every day, but at least two or three times a week (unless special arrangements have been made). In addition, students must respond to supervisor queries, show up to meetings, and complete work at reasonable times set by the supervisor. Relatedly, students should avoid last minute requests for feedback, letters of recommendation, and the like from supervisors or staff. Be professional.
- Students must inform the supervisor in good time of any academic or administrative difficulties to do with their studies. Students must write a formal letter to the Head of Department if they need to suspend studies for reasons of health, finance, change of employment, domestic difficulties, etc.
- Students must do extra readings, attend any research methodology discussions, sit in on courses, participate in departmental colloquia, seminars, conferences, etc, if stipulated by the supervisor as something needed for a successful research project.
- Students take responsibility for writing, editing, and proofreading the dissertation or thesis. Supervisors should advise students that their grammar, punctuation, spelling, capitalization, italics, spacing, etc need attention, but supervisors are not to be considered language instructors or copyeditors. If the English is too poor to submit for examination, and if a

student is unprepared to make corrections, the supervisor may require the student to hire a copyeditor at the student's expense.

FUNDING

- Fees are listed [here](#), and are approximately R21,000 per year for South Africans at M and D level. There are additional fees for international students, information about which is [here](#).
- Funding opportunities are listed [here](#) and [here](#). Regarding the UP bursaries, which at best cover your fees, it is not an application process, but a nomination process that is driven by budget availability. Ensure you read the conditions to understand the criteria applied. (Transferring students to UP, ensure that your cumulative grade point average/score is captured by the Faculty academic administration staff at time of registration.)
- Supervisors are not responsible for paying for a degree, let alone living expenses, but may or may not be in a position to provide at some financial assistance at their discretion.
- If the departmental budget so allows, the Department of Philosophy endeavours to provide partial financial support towards fees; it could almost never pay for all of a student's fees. First approach your supervisor to see whether s/he can provide support; if not, then approach the Postgraduate Coordinator or Head for assistance from the Department.
- If the budget so allows, the Department of Philosophy also endeavours to support participation in academic conferences relevant to student research. Normally, such support would be contingent on (1) demonstrating sufficient progress towards the timely completion of studies, (2) the supervisor having approved the abstract and paper to be presented, and (3) the student agreeing to submit the conference paper to an accredited journal, with the Department of Philosophy noted as affiliation, within three (3) months of the presentation. Support is normally no more than R10 000 per international conference per candidate, around R4000 for a national conference, and only in exceptional circumstances (and depending on availability of funding) would the department fund more than one conference presentation per year. The understanding is that candidates who receive funding for conference participation would attend the full conference for which they get funding, and not only their own presentation, as the goal is for postgraduates to get to know the philosophical community in general and persons who work in their area of interests in particular.
- All applications for outside bursaries, such as the NRF scholarships, usually must meet an internal deadline that is a couple weeks earlier than the NRF's. All research proposals in such applications must have been approved by the relevant supervisor, supposing the work would be done at UP.

REQUESTING LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

If you'd ever like a reference letter from a staff member for a scholarship, fellowship, grant, degree programme, job, etc, here are professional norms to follow.

Ask the staff member for a letter (ideally at least two weeks) before submitting his/her contact details to the organization.

- It is inappropriate to list a lecturer as a reference without having asked that person whether she agrees to serve in that capacity. You may not presume the lecturer is willing or able to write a letter. Sometimes a staff member won't be sufficiently informed about you and your work and so will decline. Other times the staff member might think you're not a promising match for the opportunity. Still other times the staff member could be too busy (it takes time to write a proper letter, which normally runs to two or three single spaced pages).
- Furthermore, even when a staff member is able and willing to write for you, s/he will typically want to know what to expect in terms of timeframe, to be able to plan accordingly. Receiving a request for a letter out of the blue is jarring and can upset delicate balances of time allocation.
- Ask for a letter at least two weeks before you'll need it. If for some reason you cannot give the lecturer two weeks, acknowledge the short notice.

When requesting a letter, tell the staff member (a) what it is you're applying for, (b) which organization you're applying to, (c) what the criteria are for the position/funding (perhaps providing a link to a website or attaching a flyer), and (d) why you think the staff member would be a suitable reference.

- In respect of suitability, note that good letters are from those who know you and your work intimately. The more detail that a reference can provide, the better. Short and uninformed letters from an 'influential' or 'senior' person are unlikely to do much, if any, good. If no one besides your supervisor knows you and your work intimately, then you need to do some networking (about which your supervisor or the Postgraduate Coordinator could advise).
- If you've had a lot of engagement with a lecturer, it can help to remind him/her of all the various points of contact you've had over the years. S/he might have forgotten that, say, you were a tutor for a particular class of his/hers. Make a list.

Indicate (e) when the organization needs the letter and (f) how to submit the letter to the organization in a way that preserves confidentiality.

- It is unusual and even unprofessional for letters not to remain confidential, ie the default approach is that you do not see what has been written about you. The thought is that if you won't see what's been written, the one writing is more likely to be frank and the letter is consequently taken more seriously by the organization. Even if an organization asks that you submit letters as part of a single dossier that you submit, normally it will understand if references prefer to maintain confidentiality and will make allowance for that. Provide the website or email address where the reference can submit a confidential letter. If maintaining confidentiality truly isn't possible, explain to the prospective reference what you have done to verify that.

- It's vital to provide a deadline, even if only an approximate one. Some of us are asked on a daily basis for letters, reports, reviews, comments, essays, blurbs, advice, meetings, etc, and we have to be able to plan.

Provide (g) information that would enable the staff member to write an informed letter that is tailored to the opportunity.

- Relevant information would usually include at least your cv, transcript, as well as a draft of your proposal/motivation for the position/funding. If you have publications/essays or evidence of teaching effectiveness you would like the reference to consider, attach them.
- Often if you provide this information to the reference ahead of time, s/he will give you feedback on the documents that will lead you to revise them and thereby strengthen your application.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

- The University subscribes to an 'escalation' policy, meaning that you begin with your supervisor and then work your way up incrementally if there is no satisfaction.
- Any problems should first and foremost be discussed between student and supervisor. A relationship of mutual respect and trust must be maintained between student and supervisor at all times.
- If no resolution is reached, the student or supervisor should next consult the Postgraduate Coordinator in an attempt to address the problem.
- If necessary, the Postgraduate Coordinator would then refer the problem to the Head of Department (unless, of course, the grievance is with the Head).
- If the problem persists, a panel comprised of members of the Department may be compiled to assist with the problem/conflict resolution. Usually only after such an attempt would the issue go to the Deanery.

POLICY DOCUMENTS

- **Major University Policies and Regulations:** <https://www.up.ac.za/article/2754069/up-policies-and-other-important->
- **Faculty of Humanities Postgraduate Guide:** <https://www.up.ac.za/media/shared/9/HumPdf%20docs/2018-humanities-postgrad-guide.zp156432.pdf>
- **Plagiarism Policy:** https://www.up.ac.za/media/shared/1/ZP_Files/s5106-19-plagiarism-prevention-policy.zp181077.pdf
- **General Rules and Regulations:** https://www.up.ac.za/media/shared/360/Documents/fact-finder_rules-and-regulations-2018-pdf-11-11.12.2017.zp137172.pdf
- **Student Code of Conduct:** https://www.up.ac.za/media/shared/1/Webcenter%20Content/r66_21-code-of-conduct-for-students.zp213102.pdf
- **Code of Conduct Regarding Personal Relationships Between Staff and Students:** <https://www.up.ac.za/media/shared/409/personal-relationships-between-employees-and-students.zp84967.pdf>
- **Code of Conduct Regarding Sexual Harassment:** <https://www.up.ac.za/media/shared/409/code-of-conduct-on-the-handling-of-sexual-harrasment.zp85249.pdf>
- **Unfair Discrimination Based on Race:** <https://www.up.ac.za/media/shared/409/unfair-discrimination-on-the-basis-of-race.zp87166.pdf>
- **Social Media Policy:** <https://www.up.ac.za/media/shared/409/social-media-policy.zp84971.pdf>
- **HIV and AIDS Policy:** https://www.up.ac.za/media/shared/409/ZP_Files/rt366_18-hiv-and-aids-policy.zp166026.pdf