

BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION



RESEARCH AND POSTGRADUATE CENTRE

REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE SUBMISSION AND EXAMINATION OF MPhil/DPhil THESIS

JULY 2006

1. REGULATIONS AND GUIDELINES GOVERNING THE SUBMISSION OF MPhil/DPhil THESIS

- 1.1 At least three months prior to the scheduled date for the submission of the thesis, the respective postgraduate candidate shall through his/her supervisors submit a notice in writing to the Departmental Chairperson who will forward it with written support to the Faculty Higher Degrees Committee declaring their intention to submit their thesis.
- 1.2 The notice shall be accompanied by an abstract of the thesis which shall not exceed 300/500 words for an MPhil or a DPhil thesis respectively. The abstract shall be a synopsis of the methodology of the research undertaken, the results and the major conclusions reached.
- 1.3 The Faculty Higher Degrees Committee shall submit a copy of the notice to the Postgraduate Studies Committee.
- 1.4 The Faculty Higher Degrees Committee and the Postgraduate Studies Committee will then convene a meeting to appoint the examiners of the thesis.

2. REGULATION AND GUIDELINES ON THE EXAMINATION OF THE SUBMITTED MASTER'S OR DOCTORAL THESIS

- 2.1 Every thesis shall be assessed by a minimum of three examiners with at least two internal examiners and one external examiner from outside the university.
- 2.2 The candidate must provide three loosely bound copies of the dissertation for marking by the examiners.
- 2.3 The supervisors of the student are not eligible to be appointed as examiners of the thesis.
- 2.4 The examiners shall be required to submit their detailed reports about the thesis within a period of two months from the date of receipt of the documents. If their assessments are not received within two months, new examiners must be appointed.
- 2.5 Each examiners shall be required to examine the thesis in detail and submit his/her assessment under the following headings:
 - (a) **Appropriateness of the thesis title:** The title should be a true reflection of the content of the thesis.
 - (b) **Abstract:** The abstract should give facts and convey the information about the findings of the research. If quantitative information is included, the abstract should be accompanied by

quantitative data to support the information. The abstract should not contain literature citations or references to tables or figures in the thesis, abbreviations or acronyms. The objectives and conclusions should be tied together in the abstract.

- (c) **Introduction:** Sufficient background information about the research area should be provided. The information should clearly link to the problem statement justification of study and objectives.
- (d) **Literature Review:** The literature review should be complete and leads the reader to a good understanding of what is already known about the research topic and identify the research gaps.
- (e) **Research Methods:** The examiners should also comment on the appropriateness of the research design, methods and instruments employed in the study.
- (f) **Presentation of the results:** The examiners should comment on the manner in which findings of the study are presented. If tables of data are provided, are they reduced statistically? Are the statistical analyses appropriate? Is the description of the research results of adequate clarity and scholarship?
- (g) **Discussions:** The examiners should comment on whether the discussion draws reference to previously published work. The candidate must discuss his/her results in relation to the objectives of the research and avoid generalizations and conjunctures that are not substantiated by the results presented.
- (h) **Conclusions and recommendations:** Are the conclusions clearly presented and do they articulate the outcome of the research? From the thesis, is his/her contribution to new knowledge clearly brought out? In the case of Doctoral dissertations, is there evidence of sufficient originality and new contribution to knowledge?
- (i) **Summary:** Each examiner should present to the Postgraduate Studies Committee a summary indicating whether she/he recommends the thesis for a postgraduate degree award. If there are weaknesses in the thesis, state the shortcomings?

- 2.5
- (a) Where a Master's thesis is recommended for re-writing, it must be re-submitted within 6 months.
 - (b) Where a Doctoral thesis is recommended for re-writing, it must be re-submitted within 12 months.

3. VIVA VOCE EXAMINATIONS

- 3.1 In addition to writing a thesis, postgraduate candidates shall appear for a *viva voce* examination to defend their thesis before a panel of examiners.
- 3.2 The *viva voce* examination shall take place only after the Departmental Board of examiners and Faculty Higher Degrees committee are satisfied that the thesis submitted by the candidate is considered by the examiners to be of an acceptable standard.
- 3.3 The Faculty will then advise the candidate of the *viva voce* examination date and conditions through the Deputy Registrar-Academic.
- 3.4 The external and internal examiners of the dissertation/thesis shall normally be members of the *viva voce* panel.
- 3.5 The Chairperson of the *viva voce* panel shall be a senior academic and shall be appointed by the Registrar on the recommendation of the Faculty Higher Degrees Committee.
- 3.6 The *viva voce* shall proceed in three segments as follows:
 - 3.6 Public defense by the candidate (maximum 45 minutes)
 - 3.6.1 The candidate presents his dissertation/thesis to the public comprising of members of the BUSE community and any interested stakeholders.
 - 3.6.2 This is followed by questions from the public (maximum 15 minutes), after which the public leaves the examination arena.
 - 3.7 Defense to the examination panel (maximum 1 hr)
 - 3.7.1 The candidate will field questions from the examination panel.
 - 3.7.2 The questions to be asked in the *viva voce* examination shall primarily be focused on the candidate's research area.
 - 3.7.3 The function of the *viva voce* panel shall be:
 - (a) to determine whether:
 - the dissertation/thesis presented is the original work of the candidate,
 - the broader subject area in which the research is based is fully grasped by the candidate,
 - any weaknesses in the dissertation/thesis can be adequately clarified by the candidate and,
 - the candidate is deemed to have passed or failed
 - (b) to allow examiners to moderate their marks.

- 3.8 Determination of *viva voce* outcome and processing of results
- The *viva voce* panel shall make a decision on the final outcome of the *viva voce*.
 - The Chairperson of the panel shall submit the department, a comprehensive report approved by the *viva voce* panelists.
 - The MPhil/Doctoral study shall not be graded: the examination shall be on pass/fail basis only.
 - After the *viva voce*, a candidate who has passed shall make all the corrections recommended by the examiners.
 - The corrected copy shall be approved by one of the internal examiners who should ensure that all corrections have been effected before three executive bound copies and an electronic copy of the dissertation/thesis are submitted to the Research and Postgraduate Centre.