

## Departmental Arrangements for Master's and Doctoral Degree Students

The rules apply to all master's and doctoral degree students in the Department of Social Work. It is every student's responsibility to be familiar with these rules. These rules supplement – and do not replace – the rules and regulations and other directives instituted by the University itself. Failure to comply with these rules will not be excused. If the rules are not complied with, the student may be summoned to appear before the disciplinary committee of the Department. Because of the large number of master's and doctoral degree students, no precedent can be created. The rules are applied strictly and consistently.

### 1. All master's and doctoral degree students

#### 1.1 Registration as a student at the UFS

- 1.1.1 The consent of the Head of the Department and/or Postgraduate Coordinator is necessary in order to register as a master's or doctoral degree student at the UFS for the first time. The UFS Administration will arrange this with the Head of the Department and/or Postgraduate Coordinator.
- 1.1.2 No student may attend lectures or receive study guidance if the person concerned is not registered at the UFS as a student for the degree course concerned.
- 1.1.3 No assignment, test, research report, or part of a research report may be submitted for evaluation if the student is not registered at the UFS for the degree course concerned.

#### 1.2 Registration with the South African Council for Social Service Professions

- 1.2.1 All postgraduate students in the Department of Social Work must be registered as social workers or student social workers with the South African Council for Social Service Professions, even if the person concerned is not a practising social worker.
- 1.2.2 Proof of professional registration, in the form of a certified copy of the receipt issued by the professional council must be submitted to the Department of Social Work annually in July.

#### 1.3 Ethical code

All students are subject to the stipulations of the ethical code of the Social Work Profession. Among other things, it is applied to the study in such a way that any dishonesty can lead to the suspension of the student's registration.

### 2. Research expectations: research proposal, supervisors and assessors: master's degree students (dissertation) and doctoral students (thesis)

- 2.1 Before a student can start reading on the specific topic, the student must first become conversant with research procedures and relevant matters. The content of the book below must also be mastered: Rubin, A. and Babbie, E.A. (newest edition) *Research Methods for Social Work*. Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole.

- 2.2 For a master's or doctoral degree, the student must submit a **comprehensive research proposal** and must make use of applicable sources. This proposal is evaluated by the research committee of the Department. If deemed necessary, improvements need to be made, after which the proposal may be resubmitted, in which case the same procedures will be followed.
- 2.3 Students are afforded a limited choice in respect of supervisors. Supervisors are appointed on the basis of their speciality field(s) of interest, and their current workload is taken into account.
- 2.4 If necessary and desirable, co-supervision may be agreed upon.
- 2.5 As soon as the research proposal is of a standard, that satisfies the supervisor and senior faculty members of the Department, the research proposal and the application for ethical clearance must be submitted through RIMS to the Scientific Committee for approval, before the study can proceed. The Committee may recommend changes, which must be addressed through a re-submission to the Scientific Committee.
- 2.6 External assessors are approached/recruited by the lecturer according to the directives of the Faculty. The student has no say with regard to assessors and confidentiality is maintained throughout.
- 2.7 Attending workshops of the Postgraduate School is compulsory and should be planned with the supervisor.

### **3. Study supervision**

- 3.1 A student may submit finished divisions (chapters) for comments and discussion to ensure that he/she is on the right track as far as the research is concerned. However, it remains the responsibility of the student throughout the study to proofread all work thoroughly and carefully for any spelling, typing and formulation errors before submitting it to the supervisor/promoter concerned. Should it appear that a student has submitted work that has not been checked thoroughly and carefully beforehand, the submitted work may be returned to the student before any further guidance will be provided.
- 3.2 Chapters submitted to the supervisor for evaluation and guidance must be neat and clearly legible. Students are advised not to write the next chapter before the previous one has been returned to prevent shortcomings from being repeated.
- 3.3 The supervisor's primary task is to provide the student with expert guidance in respect of the topic, planning, research methodology, report writing, empirical study and conclusions and recommendations. Scientific writing and current language usage remain the responsibility of the student and may not be left to the supervisor. The services of a text/language/technical editor must be obtained when the semi-final dissertation/thesis is submitted.
- 3.4 Plagiarism is a serious offence and implies amongst other things copying, paraphrasing and summarising the work of other individuals, submitting previously written papers to obtain a new qualification, and using chunks of information from existing sources without the necessary references.
- 3.5 Work that has been checked and commented upon must first be studied thoroughly before an in-depth discussion with the supervisor can take place.
- 3.6 The supervisor is responsible for providing the student with opportunities for discussion with a view to resolving difficulties and giving clear guidance on the study. For this purpose the supervisor will be available at any reasonable time as arranged beforehand.
- 3.7 The supervisor is responsible for keeping the student informed regarding the standard of his/her progress, but is not supposed to take over the responsibility of the student. For this purpose the supervisor will provide continuous and prompt feedback on the standard of submitted work and may suggest additional literature.

- 3.8 The student must show initiative and act in a creative manner and must not expect to be “driven” by the supervisor. For this reason students are expected to work consistently and to meet the deadlines agreed upon. If a student should fail to progress as desired (academically as well as far as time is concerned) and cannot give good and acceptable reasons for this, his/her registration may be terminated in which case continued/future registration will not be recommended.
- 3.9 It is the student’s responsibility to obtain permission (written if necessary) from organisations/institutions with an interest in the study to conduct the research. The Department of Social Work or the study supervisor will not negotiate with interested organisations and/or with the University Administration on behalf of the student. In addition it is the responsibility of the student to comply with the conditions set by the organisation/institution.
- 3.10 During university holidays study guidance will be provided as agreed upon with the student. The study supervisor is under no obligation to provide supervision after closing dates and until the start of the next term.
- 3.11 Guidelines regarding the length of a dissertation or thesis are provided. However, keep in mind that it quality is more important than quantity (length or scope).
- 3.12 It is the prerogative of the student to discuss the study with other experts, but he/she must honour the agreement with and guidelines set by the supervisor. In case of insurmountable problems in respect of the supervision, the Head of the Department may be consulted.

#### **4. Research outputs (dissertation and thesis)**

- 4.1 Written permission by the supervisor/promoter is required before the dissertation/thesis may be submitted to the UFS Administration.
- 4.2 An assessment instrument for the specific level will be provided to ensure that he/she is clear about the criteria.
- 4.3 If a dissertation or thesis is accepted conditionally, the student must make the corrections as soon as possible in order to qualify for the conferring of the degree.
- 4.4 Reports by assessors on the dissertation or thesis may be discussed with the student by the supervisor/promoter.
- 4.5 A master’s degree student will be expected to read at least one paper and/or produce a publishable article based on the research, and a doctoral degree student will be expected to produce two such contributions; in both cases in co-authorship with the supervisor/promoter. Should the student fail to comply with this requirement within six months, the supervisor/promoter has the right to publish an article or articles with or without mentioning the student’s name as co-author.

#### **5. Policy documents**

- 5.1 All relevant policy documents, viz. General Rules of the UFS, Rulebook of the Faculty, and Policy on Plagiarism must be read and adhered to.

#### **6. Statement by the student**

By means of my signature below and initialling of each page, I declare that I have studied this document, that I understand the contents and purpose thereof, and that I undertake to abide by the rules it contains.

**NAME AND SURNAME OF STUDENT:** \_\_\_\_\_

**SIGNATURE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**SIGNATURE: HEAD OF DEPARTMENT/POSTGRADUATE COORDINATOR:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_