



## Procedures for the appointment of examiners

- 1) The recommendation of Examiners is confidential and must not be communicated to the Candidate at any time.
- 2) In order to avoid delays in the examination process, at least two months before the submission of the thesis, the Principal Supervisor will:
  - a. consult with the candidate on any objections the candidate may have to potential examiners. Any such objections will be taken into account in the process of selection of examiners;
  - b. consult with the co-supervisors and Director of Higher Degree Research and Training (DHDRT) regarding potentially suitable examiners and any possible conflicts of interest. MAJOR conflicts of interest would normally preclude the involvement of the proposed examiner. In the case of MINOR conflicts of interest, it is up to the Principal Supervisor to make a case as to why the proposed examiner is still appropriate – this information will be passed by the DHDRT to the Dean, Graduate Studies for a decision;
  - c. provide a list of suggested examiners via email to the DHDRT with associated URL's /CV/publications, along with the thesis title and summary.
- 3) The DHDRT will then:
  - a. Independently check for potential conflicts of interest (e.g. current and previous institutional affiliations, co-authored papers etc);
  - b. scrutinise the suitability of the proposed examiners based on qualifications, expertise and relevance to the project;
  - c. if necessary, raise any concerns with the supervisor and discuss potential alternatives.
- 4) Once there is an in-principle agreement about the suitability of examiners between the supervisors and DHDRT, the Principal Supervisor can approach the potential examiners to establish their willingness and availability to examine the thesis. When contacting the potential examiners, Principal Supervisors should preferably use the template letter provided by the Graduate School. The following information must be provided:
  - a. the name of the Candidate and an indication of the predicted date of thesis submission;
  - b. the thesis title and summary/abstract;
  - c. an indication of the expected timeframe for examination (8 weeks);
  - d. reference to the conflict of interest guidelines;
  - e. if applicable, an indication of whether they are being recommended as a reserve examiner and the importance of this role.
- 5) The Principal Supervisor also should obtain the following information from potential examiners for administrative purposes:
  - a. the best email address to contact them on for the examination process;
  - b. telephone contact number;
  - c. the number of Higher Degree Research students at a the Masters, PhD, and Professional Doctorate levels which they have supervised;
  - d. the number of Higher Degree Research theses at a the Masters, PhD, and Professional Doctorate levels which they have examined;
  - e. if relevant the details of any perceived conflict of interest between themselves and the Candidate;
  - f. whether they prefer to examine a hard copy or an electronic copy of the thesis and a physical address for hard copies if relevant (no PO Boxes).

## Procedures for the appointment of examiners cont.

- 6) Once the required number of examiners have been secured, the Principal Supervisor should fill out the Recommendation of Examiners form.
- 7) After considering the examiners that have been formally nominated by the Principal Supervisor, the DHDRT will make the recommendation to the Dean, Graduate Studies. In order to approve the recommended examiners, the Dean must be provided with the Recommendation of Examiners form and supporting information from the Principal Supervisor including:
  - a. thesis summary/abstract;
  - b. CV or URL link to CV for all the proposed examiners;
  - c. Details of at least 3-5 research publications from each examiner and an explanation of their relevant expertise in relation to the thesis;
  - d. An explanation of any perceived conflicts of interest.
- 8) After the examiners have been approved by the Dean, Graduate Studies, their details will be recorded and stored until the thesis has been submitted and approved for examination by the supervisory team and DHDRT.
- 9) Examiners will be made familiar with the requirements of the University, AQF standards for the degree and the essential parts of the Course Rules governing the particular degree.
- 10) After the thesis has been submitted, all subsequent liaison with the examiners will be made by the Graduate School. Principal Supervisors are not to contact the examiners under any circumstances and if the examiners contact the supervisors, their enquiries should be immediately referred to the DHDRT and Graduate School.
- 11) In order to preserve the integrity and independence of the examination process, the identity of examiners will not be revealed to candidates until the examination process has been completed and not then if an examiner has requested to remain anonymous.

**Lismore**

**Coffs Harbour**

**Gold Coast**