



GENERAL ACADEMIC REGULATIONS FOR POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

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CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION:	2
1.1. Purpose:	2
1.2. Scope:	2
2. GENERAL FRAMEWORK	2
2.1. Awards	2
2.2. Admission and Registration	4
2.2.1. Application for admission	4
2.2.2. Conditions for registration	4
2.2.3. Assessment	5
3 REGULATIONS	5
3.1. Admission	5
3.2. Registration	6
3.3. Student Identity Cards	7
3.4. Duration of the program	7
3.5. Assessment	8
3.5.1. Postgraduate Certificate:	8
3.5.2. Postgraduate Diploma	8
3.5.3. Master's degree and PhD by Coursework, Master's degree and PhD by Research	8
3.5.4. Award under exceptional circumstances	27
3.5.5. Review of an Examination Decision	28



1. INTRODUCTION:

- i) The development of these regulations has been guided by the University of Rwanda (UR) structure and two documents approved by UR Senate governing postgraduate programs, namely the Framework and Regulations for Higher Degrees by Coursework and Dissertations/Thesis, and the Framework and Regulations for Higher Degrees by Research

This set of regulations rationalizes the framework into common regulations appropriate for the management of postgraduate programmes.

- ii) All students enrolled for a higher degree shall be bound by these regulations.
iii) These Academic Regulations should be read in conjunction with the UR General Structure for PhD by Research, UR General Structure for PhD by Completed Body of Work, Program Proposal and Program Specifications for each higher degree program as approved by the Higher Education Council (HEC).
iv) These regulations are subject to amendments by UR Senate.

1.1.Purpose:

These Academic Regulations for postgraduate degrees have been developed to ensure quality in the delivery of postgraduate programmes, safeguard academic standards of the University of Rwanda and protect students' interests.

1.2.Scope:

These academic regulations are applicable to the following programmes at the UR:

- Postgraduate Certificate
- Postgraduate Diploma
- Masters by Research
- Masters by Course Work
- Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) by Research
- Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) by Course Work
- Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) by Completed Body of Work

2. GENERAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Awards

UR shall award higher degrees to qualifying students registered in the following programmes:

- i) **Postgraduate certificate** (Level 6 of the National Qualifications Framework for Rwanda) shall be awarded to a registered student who successfully completes an approved programme with a minimum of 60 Credit units.



- ii) **Postgraduate diploma** (Level 6) shall be awarded to a registered student who successfully completes an approved programme with a minimum of 120 Credit units.
- iii) **Masters degree by research** (Level 6) shall be awarded to a candidate who has demonstrated an understanding of research methods appropriate to the chosen field by successfully completing supervised research in a specified field, and has presented and defended a thesis in an oral examination to the satisfaction of examiners, in accordance with the regulations. It has between 180 and 240 Credit Units.
- iv) **Masters degree by coursework** (Level 6) shall be awarded after the student has successfully completed a Masters degree programme comprising of coursework and research and accumulating the total number of Credit Units of between 180 and 240. For professional master's degrees (e.g. MMed), the number of credits required is 360, with the dissertation not being less than one third (i.e. 120) of the total credits.
- v) **Masters degree by research** (Level 6) shall be awarded to a candidate who, having critically investigated and evaluated an approved research topic and demonstrated an understanding of research methods appropriate to the chosen field. The thesis produced has a total of between 180 and 240 Credit Units.
- vi) **Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)** (Level 10) is offered at the UR:
 - a) **PhD by Research** shall be awarded to a candidate who, having critically investigated an approved research project resulting in an independent and original contribution to the body of knowledge, has demonstrated an understanding of research methods appropriate to the chosen field, and has presented and defended a thesis in oral examination to the satisfaction of examiners. Students on this PhD programme shall take Research Methodology and Academic Writing modules as mandatory and non-credit bearing modules. The total Credit Units for the qualification is 360.
 - b) **PhD with Coursework** shall be awarded after the student has successfully completed a study programme of 360 credits of which, between 60 and 90 credits shall come from the taught component and between 270 to 300 credits come from the doctoral research thesis, and has presented and defended a thesis in oral examination to the satisfaction of examiners, in accordance with the regulations for the award of Doctorate Degree.
 - c) **PhD by Completed Body of Work** shall be awarded to a candidate who has submitted his/her work in the form of peer review publications, demonstrated an independent and original contribution to knowledge to the satisfaction of the examiners and an understanding of the research methodology employed in its creation, and assessed its context in relation to the developing state



of the art in the subject concerned. The research work must have been conducted within the last ten years and the publications must be compiled in a form of a thesis demonstrating coherence in the generated body of knowledge. The candidate must present and defend the thesis to the satisfaction of examiners in an oral examination, the conduct of which will be in accordance with the regulations for the award of PhD.

vii) **Honorary Degrees:** Honorary Doctorate will be offered in accordance with the UR policy for the award of such degrees.

viii) **Posthumous Awards:** A postgraduate qualification may be awarded posthumously, on the basis of completed requirements for the postgraduate programme, by a candidate who died before the award of the degree.

2.2. Admission and Registration

2.2.1. Application for admission

- (i) Candidates applying for UR higher degree shall apply through online portal to a specific programme as advertised by the University of Rwanda Centre for Postgraduate Studies (UR CPGS).
- (ii) Applications shall be processed by relevant subcommittees of the Postgraduate Studies Committee and the outcome, with lists of recommended candidates, shall be approved by the School Council/Team of Experts in the case of Centre of Excellence and the College Academic Council (CAC) and then communicated to the Directorate of UR CPGS to issue admission letters.
- (iii) In the event of a delay in the application process, the College Principal and the Dean of School can approve the lists of recommended candidates on behalf of their respective Councils and approval can be ratified in the next formal meeting.
- (iv) Successful applicants shall be notified of the decision by the Director of UR CPGS, through a formal admission letter, which will show the system-generated student ID reference number, the programme in which they have been admitted as well as the school, college and campus locations of the programme. The letter shall also include instructions on how to pay the fees due and how to register.

2.2.2. Conditions for registration

- (I) **Masters degree, Postgraduate Diploma, and Postgraduate Certificates:** Admitted candidates shall proceed with online registration at the College Registrar's office after fulfilling the following registration requirements.
 - a. Admission letter
 - b. Proof of payment of the required fees
 - c. Certified copies of academic documents
 - d. Copies of identification documents
 - e. Equivalence from Higher Education (for foreign degree holders) (Applicants without proof of equivalence shall be given conditional registration subject to producing evidence of the equivalence not later than one semester after being registered. Failure to do so shall result in de-registration).
 - f. One copy of a valid Residence Permit or Student Visa for foreign students.



(II) **Doctor of Philosophy (PhD):**

Admitted candidates shall proceed with online registration at the College Registrar's office after fulfilling the following registration requirements.

- a. Admission letter
- b. Proof of payment of the required fees
- c. Certified copies of academic documents
- d. Copies of identification documents
- e. Equivalence from Higher Education (for foreign degree holders) (Applicants without proof of equivalence shall be given conditional registration subject to producing evidence of the equivalence not later than one semester after being registered. Failure to do so shall result in de-registration). PhD student will be admitted and allowed to register as a bona fide UR student based on applications documents including the concept on research topic. She/he will be given one semester (6 months) to complete and defend the full proposal. This semester will also be counted as part of the training period.
- f. One copy of a valid Residence Permit or Student Visa for foreign students.

2.2.3. Assessment

There will be an assessment in all higher degrees. It shall be conducted through continuous and final assessments depending on the programme.

- (i) Postgraduate certificates will be assessed based on modules.
- (ii) Postgraduate diplomas will be assessed based on modules, industry attachment and action research.
- (iii) Master's degrees and PhD by research will be assessed on the basis of compulsory modules and approved research process.
- (iv) Master's degrees and PhD with coursework will be assessed on the basis of delivered modules and approved research process.
- (v) PhD by completed work will be assessed based on research, publications and the compiled thesis.

3 REGULATIONS

3.1. Admission

- (i) Reference to the Academic Calendar for Postgraduate Studies, the College Director of Teaching and Learning Enhancement (DTLE) shall submit to the UR CPGS a list of postgraduate programmes for advertisement and call for applications. The titles of the programmes and general entry requirements shall be as described in the programme proposal and programme specifications in the programme accreditation documents. The school can add specific entry requirements.
- (ii) The UR CPGS shall send out the call for applications with clear steps and guidelines for online application.
- (iii) The received applications shall be forwarded, as soon as they come, to the appropriate schools or research centres for consideration by the Postgraduate Studies Committee (appendix: Appointment and Terms of Reference of the



Postgraduate Studies Committee). The college registrar and college DTLE shall be members of all subcommittees of the Postgraduate Studies Committee in charge of selection and admissions.

- (iv) Candidates wishing to be admitted under alternative requirements shall have their applications assessed by a joint selection committee consisting of representatives from respective schools or research centres and the UR CPGS. The mentioned alternative requirements shall be part of the call for applications.
- (v) The outcome of the selection process shall be approved by the School Council and College Council (CAC). To avoid delays in the process, the College Principal and School Dean can approve this outcome on behalf of their respective councils, subject to ratification at the next formal meeting.
- (vi) Successful candidates shall be notified of the decision by the Directorate of UR CPGS through a formal admission letter with guidelines and information on registration.
- (vii) The list of admitted students for each program shall be submitted to the college registrars for facilitation of the registration. The university registrar shall be copied for information.

3.2. Registration

- (i) Admitted candidates shall be required to submit the following documents to the college registrar to be allowed to register.
- (ii) At the first registration, each student shall provide the following documents:
 - 1. Original and certified copies of academic credentials as prescribed in the entry requirements (original certificates to be returned to the applicant). In the case of students with foreign certificates, a Certificate of Equivalence provided by the relevant agency will be required.
 - 2. One copy of a national identity card or passport
 - 3. A medical certificate issued less than three months before the registration date
 - 4. Two recent passport size photographs
 - 5. Proof of payment of required fees
 - 6. Proof of funding
 - 7. One copy of a valid Residence Permit or Student Visa for foreign students.
- (iii) Ongoing students shall be required to register every academic year.
- (iv) Official names for academic records
 - a. Students registered with the university shall be known by the names that appear on all documents submitted to the Office of the College Registrar during registration. The sequence in which the names shall be entered in the foregoing documents shall be maintained, that is, surname, middle name, first name.
 - b. Only the names under which students are registered shall be considered official, and it is these that shall be used on all university documents.
 - c. A student may apply to the Office of the College Registrar for recognition of a new name or names by the university, and must attach documents



showing compliance with the legal requirements for a change of names to their application.

- d. If the Office of the College Registrar is satisfied that legal requirements have been fulfilled, he/she shall authorize the change of name or names. Any change of name or names thus approved, shall be kept in an official data base maintained by the university registrar.

3.3. Student Identity Cards

- (i) Each registered student shall be provided with a UR student identity card.
- (ii) A student identity card shall be required for use of the library, tutorials, practical sessions, laboratories, examination rooms, canteen and other services.
- (iii) A student should carry the identity card at all times and the university reserves the right to refuse access to facilities without the card.
- (iv) A student whose identity card is damaged, lost or stolen shall do the following:
 - a. Pay a fee indicated in the approved fee structure in order to get a replacement (in the case of a damaged card). She/he shall bring the damaged card to the Office of College Registrar.
 - b. Request for a replacement. The request shall be granted only if the university is convinced of their loss and circumstances of the loss.

3.4. Duration of the program

- (i) The normal minimum and maximum periods of the program shall be as follows:

S/N	Type of the Program	Minimum	Maximum
1	Postgraduate Certificate		6 months 1 semester
2	Postgraduate Diploma	9 months	12 months 2 semesters
3	Master's programme (full time)	18 months	24 months 4 semesters
4	Master's programme (part time)	30 months	36 months 6 semesters
5	PhD by research	36 months	48 months 8 semesters
6	PhD by course work	36 months	48 months 8 semesters
7	PhD (part time)	48 months	60 months 10 semesters
8	PhD by completed body of work	12 months	24 months 4 semesters

(ii) Extension of Registration

At the level of master's and PhD programmes, a candidate may apply for an extension of the period of registration to the program, normally for not more than six months for master's programme and one year for PhD programme. A candidate seeking such an extension, with support of the main supervisor, shall apply to the Director of UR CPGS in the appropriate form and with valid reasons. The decision shall be communicated to the



applicant based on the assessment and recommendation from the relevant School.

(iii) De-Registration or suspension of registration

A candidate may be de-registered by the College Academic Council due to unsatisfactory progress.

A candidate may request to suspend registration by filling an appropriate form to be submitted to the College Academic Council. Approval for suspension of registration will be effective only after the approval of the College Academic Council.

(iv) Annual Re-registration

Subject to satisfactory progress assessed through annual monitoring, a candidate shall re-register and pay required fees as may be determined from time to time by the university.

3.5. Assessment

3.5.1. Postgraduate Certificate:

- (i) Postgraduate certificates shall be assessed based on modules
- (ii) Each module is assessed through continuous assessment and a critical and analytical report, with each of the two above components accounting for 50% of the total mark.
- (iii) The overall pass mark in all the assessed modules shall be 60%.

3.5.2. Postgraduate Diploma

- (i) Postgraduate Diploma shall be assessed based on modules, industry attachment (internship) and action research.
- (ii) Modules are assessed through continuous assessment and final examination. Continuous assessments shall contribute 60% to the total mark for the module and the final module examination shall make up 40% of the total mark for the module.
- (iii) The pass mark in all the assessed modules shall be 60%

3.5.3. Masters degree and PhD by Coursework, Master's degree and PhD by Research

3.5.3.1. Coursework

a) Overall Coursework Assessment

- (i) The purpose of assessment is to measure the achievement of the intended learning outcomes. The form(s) of assessment for any module shall be appropriate for this purpose.
- (ii) Modules are assessed by continuous assessment and by a final assignment or examination at the completion of the module. Continuous assessments shall contribute 60% to the total mark for the module and the final module examination shall make up 40% of the total mark for the module.



- (iii) Continuous assessment includes assignments, tests, quizzes, and practicals carried out during the teaching weeks, where grades are provided before the final examination.
- (iv) Students will normally receive feedback on their performance on continuous assessment before the next assessment on the same module.
- (v) A module is passed if its specified learning outcomes have been achieved. The assessment of each module shall generate a single mark between 0 and 100% expressing the extent to which the learning outcomes have been achieved.
- (vi) The pass mark for all levels shall be 60%. In exceptional circumstances, special examinations within the same academic year may be considered. These do not set a precedent and must be fully documented with evidence of exceptional circumstances including medical certification where relevant.
- (vii) The grade for a module is made up of a combination of the grades for continuous assessment and final examination weighted as approved in the programme specification. The grade shall be deemed incomplete if a student does not sit for final module examination.

b) Coursework Continuous Assessment

- (i) The continuous assessment shall comprise all tests and assignments done out during the progress of the module.
- (ii) Students shall receive feedback on their grades and performance on continuous assessment before the next assessment on the same module.
- (iii) The continuous assessment shall constitute 60% of the total mark of the module.
- (iv) The final continuous assessment marks shall be made available to the students not less than one week before the beginning of the examination period.

c) Coursework Final Examination

- i) Only students who have completed the requirements for sitting for the final examination shall be allowed into the examination room.
- ii) The final examination at the end of each semester is compulsory and shall constitute forty percent (40%) of the total mark for the module.
- iii) A ten-credit module shall be assessed by one two-hour examination while a twenty credit module shall be assessed by a three-hour examination. The assessment of modules of other weighting shall be in proportion to their size.
- iv) All assessments shall be moderated internally to ensure the quality and compliance with the university standards.

d) Internal and External Examination

All final examinations must be moderated by internal and external examiners as follows:

- i) The examination papers, module content and marking schemes shall be reviewed at the departmental level by a team comprising of module leaders and subject experts. This should be completed at the start of the academic year.



- ii) The internally moderated examination papers, the corresponding model answers, and marking schemes shall be sent to the external examiners for moderation. The examination should not be used until the external examiner has approved it.
- iii) After the candidates have sat the examination, the internal team of moderators shall meet to review borderline cases in the marked scripts as well as select samples of scripts to be sent for external evaluation.
- iv) A sample of 15% of the examination scripts of each module with top, middle and low scores shall be sent to the external examiners.

e) Conflict of interest

No member of academic staff shall engage in any form of assessment of a candidate with whom there is a potential conflict, nor shall she or he be a member of a Board of Examiners considering such a case. In case a Head of Department or a Dean of School be involved, then a substitute shall be appointed by the Dean of School or Principal respectively as appropriate. A member of academic staff is required to excuse her/himself if she/he feels her/his impartiality might be compromised. (A conflict of interest includes a family member, someone with whom there is an intimate relationship, a candidate being supported financially, or a candidate with whom there is a civil dispute or academic complaint pending)

f) Conduct of Examinations

UR Guidelines on Assessment, Examination Moderation & Conflict Prevention shall apply

g) Grading System for Coursework component

- i) The marks awarded for each module shall be converted into grades before they are presented to Senate, and results transcripts shall show the letter grades only. All marks shall be rounded up to the nearest integer. The grading system is as follows:

Marks	Letter Grade
80-100	A
70-79.99	B
60-69.99	C
0-59.99	Fail

- ii) Module leaders shall submit module grades to School Postgraduate Coordinators who shall be responsible for presenting them to the School Council.
- iii) Each student shall earn a specified number of credits for each module passed. No credit shall be earned by a student in a failed module.



Examination Board

- i) The School Council shall constitute an Examination Board to consider student grades and determine whether students may proceed or not. The meeting of the board shall be chaired by the Dean or her/his nominee. The college DTLE and the college registrar shall be present and UR-CPGS shall be represented in the Examination Board meeting. The quorum for such meetings shall be three quarters of the total membership.
- ii) The board shall consider grades, performance and progression of all postgraduate students. Marks awarded for each module will be provisional, and shall be released as such, after confirmation by the relevant Examination Board. Final marks shall be released only after approval by the College Academic Council.
- iii) In cases of dispute, decisions shall be taken by an absolute majority of those present. In the case of a tied vote, the outcome most favourable to the student shall be taken.
- iv) The details of the board's deliberations are confidential and shall not be conveyed to any student or any other person outside the board. The board must use registration numbers and at no time, must names of students be used.
- v) The minutes of the board shall be passed to the college Principal for onward transmission to Academic Council.

3.5.3.2 Progression

- i) School Council and College Councils shall deliberate on results at the end of each semester and students shall be notified of their performance;
- ii) Special consideration shall be given to masters and PhD by research where the clock counting starts at the moment of first registration and applications are being received continuously at any time.
- iii) The students' progression is decided based on passed and failed modules. Students shall have to pass continuous assessment as a requirement for sitting for final examination.
- iv) Students who failed the final examination will be given an opportunity to redo the final examination of failed modules. This opportunity can be given only once in a particular module.
- v) Upon unsatisfactory progress, following the recommendation from the School Council, the College Academic can decide that she/he have failed the program and recommend for deregistration.

3.5.3.3. Dissertation and Thesis

i) Types of thesis

a. Monographs

A thesis in a monograph format can be submitted for the award of master's and PhD degrees by research. It shall comprise of the following sections: Introduction, Literature Review, Methodology, Presentation of Findings, and Discussion and Conclusion.



Candidates doing the master's and PhD programme by coursework shall be required to produce a monograph as the output of their research component of their studies.

Each PhD thesis monograph shall comprise of at least two papers published or evidenced as accepted for publication in a refereed indexed journal.

Each master's thesis monograph shall comprise of at least one paper published or evidenced as accepted for publication in referred indexed journal or conference proceedings

b. Thesis by Publications

A thesis comprising of a collection of papers published in refereed indexed journals and conference proceedings. It shall comprise of the following sections: Abstract, Introduction, a collection of peer reviewed and published papers, and a Conclusion. The introduction shall give a context to the published papers and the body of knowledge generated. The published papers shall demonstrate a coherent body of knowledge generated.

ii) Thesis Format

The thesis shall be written and formatted in accordance with Senate approved UR Guidelines on Academic Writing.

Candidates are warned that a thesis exceeding the maximum word length by 10% will not be examined.

iii) Copies of Thesis for Examination

- a. The School Postgraduate Coordinator shall notify the candidate of the number of copies of the thesis to be submitted for examination.
- b. Copies of the thesis submitted for examination shall remain the property of the University.

iv) Format of Thesis for Examination

The following requirements shall be adhered to in the format of the submitted thesis

- a. The monograph thesis shall normally be in A4 format. UR CPGS may give permission for a thesis to be submitted in another format when it is satisfied that the contents of the thesis can be better expressed in that format (e.g. A5 format for thesis by publications).
- b. Copies of the thesis shall be presented in a permanent and legible form. In the case where copies are produced by photocopying, then they shall be of a permanent nature, and where word processor and printing devices are used, the printer shall be capable of producing text of a satisfactory quality. The size of the character used in the main text, including displayed matter and notes, shall not be less than 2.00mm for capital letters and 1.5mm for lower case letters.
- c. The thesis shall be printed on the recto side of the page only. The paper shall be white and within the range 70 g/m to 100 g/m.



- d. The margin at the left-hand binding edge of the page shall not be less than 40mm; other margins shall not be less than 15mm
- e. Double or one-and-a-half spacing shall be used in the typescript except for indented quotations or footnotes, where single spacing may be used.
- f. Pages shall be numbered consecutively through the main text, including photographs and diagrams
- g. The title page shall give the following information:
 1. Full title of the thesis
 2. Full name of the author
 3. That the degree is awarded by the University of Rwanda
 4. The award for which the degree is submitted in full fulfilment of its requirements
 5. The month and year of submission.
 6. The TURNITIN antiplagiarism check declaration

v) Binding of Thesis submitted for Examination

Copies of the thesis submitted for examination shall be in a temporary but fixed binding. Ring binding or spiral binding is not acceptable. Wherever possible, the thesis should be in one volume. However, should it be necessary because of size to split the thesis, then the Appendices should be in volume 2, and both volumes must show a title page and front cover indicating volume number.

vi) Binding Costs

Except where a specific budget has been allocated within a research project for the costs associated with binding a thesis, the candidate shall be responsible for costs incurred in the submission of the thesis for examination and the final binding.

3.5.3.4. Dissertation and thesis examination

- i) Any thesis submitted for examination shall HAVE BOUND WITHIN IT an anti-plagiarism check report showing the similarity index.
- ii) The similarity index shall be within the limits prescribed by the School
- iii) The examination for master's dissertations and PhD theses shall have the following two stages:
 - a) Submission and preliminary assessment by examiners
 - b) Defence in an oral or any other approved alternative form of examination

3.5.3.4.1. Examiners

- i) Composition of Examination Team
 - A master's dissertation shall be examined by 1 examiner external to the university and two internal examiners.
 - The doctoral thesis shall be examined by 2 examiners external to the institution, at least one of whom shall be from outside the country.

ii) Definition of External Examiner

An External Examiner shall both be independent to the university and not have acted previously as the candidate's supervisor or advisor, or research collaborator. Any prior connection with the candidate must be declared at the point of nomination as an examiner on the examiner contract form. The external examiner shall not normally be either a supervisor of another candidate in the same School or an external examiner on a taught course in the same School.

Former members of staff, graduates and former students of the university shall normally not be approved as external examiners until three years after the termination of their employment or completion of their studies with the university.

No External examiner is appointed for more than two consecutive terms, each of three years.

External examiners are not normally re-appointed for a period of 4 years to avoid their familiarity with the academic unit.

iii) Experience of Examiners

a) For the master's dissertations, examiners shall be of the rank of Lecturer and/or above

a. For PhD thesis, examiners shall be Senior Lecturers or above, holders of PhD degrees, experienced in research in the general area of the candidate's thesis and, normally have experience as a specialist in the topic(s) to be examined.

b. Within the limits of a maximum of three examiners, every effort should be made to appoint examiners to cover the academic content of interdisciplinary thesis.

c. At least one external examiner shall have experience (normally two or more previous examinations) of examining research degree candidates.

iv) Nomination of Examiners

The School Postgraduate Coordinator shall forward to the Dean names of proposed examiners, their CVs and the abstract of the thesis for consideration and approval by the School Council. Upon recommendation by the School Council, the director of UR CPGS shall appoint the external examiners. This must be done in good time and must not delay the progress of candidates.

v) External Examiners Fees and Expenses

The college shall be responsible for the payment of the fees and other expenses related to external examination at levels determined by the university.

3.5.3.4.2. Procedures for the First Examination

i) Notice of intention to submit



In consultation with the supervisor, the candidate shall express the intent of submission to the Director of UR CPGS through the School Postgraduate Studies Coordinator not less than three months before the proposed date of submission of the thesis.

- ii) Notifications to Candidate of Dissertation or Thesis Submission Procedures
The School Postgraduate Studies Coordinator shall make known to the candidate the procedure to be followed for the submission of the thesis (including the number of copies to be submitted for examination) and any conditions to be satisfied before the candidate may be considered eligible for examination.
- iii) Submission of the Dissertation or Thesis to Examiners
 - a. The Director of UR CPGS shall first check the thesis for compliance with the university requirements before sending a copy of the thesis to each examiner, together with the examiner's preliminary report form and the university regulations, and shall ensure that the examiners are properly briefed as to their duties.
 - b. The Director of UR CPGS shall ensure that all the examiners have completed and returned the preliminary reports to the office of UR CPGS before the oral examination takes place.
- iv) Examiners' Confidential Independent Preliminary Reports
Each examiner shall read and examine the thesis and submit an independent preliminary report on the appropriate form to the Director of UR CPGS seven days before any oral or alternative form of examination is held, for exchange between the examiners. While completing the preliminary report, each examiner shall consider whether the thesis provisionally satisfies the requirements of the degree and where possible make an appropriate provisional recommendation subject to the outcome of any oral examination. Except where otherwise authorised by the examiners, the content of the reports will be held in confidence between the examiners and (following the oral examination) the Director of UR CPGS
- v) Examiners' Recommendations
Following the completion of the first examination, the examiners may recommend that:
 - i. The candidate be awarded the degree, subject to the outcome of the oral examination
 - ii. The candidate be awarded the degree subject to amendments being made to the thesis and the outcome of the oral examination. Amendments to be completed within 3 months after the oral examination
 - iii. The candidate be permitted to re-submit for the degree and be re-examined
 - iv. The candidate not to be awarded the degree, with no possibility of re-examination
- vi) Amendments



Where the examiners are satisfied that the candidate has in general reached the standard required for the degree, but consider that the thesis requires some amendments and corrections not so substantial as to call for the submission of a revised thesis, and recommend that the degree be awarded subject to the candidate amending the thesis to the satisfaction of the internal and/or the external examiner(s), they shall indicate to the candidate in writing what amendments and corrections are required.

The candidate should be notified of the different grades like: No change; Minor textual corrections in one month; Substantial changes in 3 months; Thesis revision in 6 months

The candidate shall submit the amended thesis within the time limit specified by the examiners from the date of delivery to the candidate of the list of amendments and corrections required.

3.5.3.4.3. Procedures for the Second Examination

i) Cases in which examiners are unable to agree

Where the examiners' recommendations are not unanimous, the Director of UR CPGS shall, as recommended by the School, appoint an additional external examiner

ii) Appointment of an Additional External Examiner

Where an additional external examiner is appointed, he/she shall prepare an independent preliminary report on the basis of the thesis and, if considered necessary, may conduct a further oral examination. That examiner should not be informed of the recommendations of the other examiners. On receipt of the report from the additional examiner the Director of UR CPGS shall complete the examination process.

iii) Referral prior to oral

Where the examiners are of the opinion that the thesis is so unsatisfactory that no useful purpose would be served by conducting an oral examination, they may recommend that the College Council dispense with the oral examination and refer the thesis for further work. In such cases, the examiners shall provide the College Academic Council with written guidance for the candidate concerning the deficiencies of the thesis. The examiners shall not recommend that a candidate fail outright without holding an oral examination or other alternative examination.

iv) Notification of deficiencies of dissertations and theses

Where the Director of UR CPGS decides that the degree shall not be awarded, and that no re-examination be permitted, the examiners shall prepare an agreed statement of the deficiencies of the thesis and the reason for their recommendation, which shall be forwarded to the candidate by the Director of UR CPGS.

v) Cheating or Plagiarism suspected in the dissertations and thesis

Where evidence of cheating or plagiarism in preparation of the thesis, or other irregularities in the conduct of the examination come to light during, or subsequent



to the recommendation of the examiners, the School Council and the College Academic Council shall consider the matter, in consultation with the Director of UR CPGS and if necessary the examiners, and take action in accordance with the Regulations on Cheating and Plagiarism.

3.5.3.4.4. Candidate's Responsibilities in the First Examination Process

- i) Submission Prior to Expiry of Registration
The candidate shall ensure that the thesis is submitted before the expiry of the registration period, and shall ensure that each copy of the thesis is complete before submission.
- ii) Conditions of Eligibility
The candidate shall satisfy any conditions of eligibility for examination required by Senate. Students registered in the master's Programme will be required to have at least one publication submitted and accepted by a peer reviewed journal. Students registered in the PhD Programme will be required to have at least two publications in a peer reviewed journal. The university will make available a list of recommended peer reviewed journals.
- iii) Examination Arrangements
The candidate shall take no part in the arrangement of the examination and shall have no formal contact with external examiner(s) between the appointment of the examiners and the oral examination.
- iv) Submission Declaration
The candidate shall confirm, through the submission of a declaration form, that the work is their own, or that certain parts were undertaken in collaboration with others, and whether any other persons undertook any interviews, data collection, or experimentation on their behalf, and that the thesis has not been submitted for a comparable academic award. The candidate shall not be precluded from incorporating in the thesis, a wider field of work, which has already been submitted for a degree or comparable award, provided that it is indicated, on the declaration form and explicitly in the thesis, which work has been so incorporated.

The candidate shall also obtain the signatures of the supervisors indicating that they have been consulted about the submission. Where the supervisors do not think the thesis is ready for examination, this shall not be a bar to the candidate submitting it if she or he is determined to do so. The declaration form shall be forwarded to the examiners. The candidate shall ensure that the thesis format is in accordance with the requirements of the institution's regulations.

3.5.3.4.5. Procedures for the Second Examination (Oral Examination/Viva Voce)

- i) Notification of Date of Oral Examination
The Director of UR CPGS shall determine the date for the examination, in consultation with the Dean of School, and accordingly, notify the candidate, all supervisors and the examiners.



- ii) Arrangements for the Oral Examination
The School Dean in Collaboration with the Director of UR CPGS will arrange and ensure the *viva voce* takes place smoothly.
- iii) Location and Language of Oral
An oral examination shall normally be held in Rwanda, except with the specific written permission of the Deputy Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Research (DVC-AAR). The oral examination shall be conducted in English. Exceptions, which must be approved by the DVC-AAR, include studies of linguistics and language.
- iv) Non-Examiners permitted at Oral
With the consent of the candidate, one supervisor may attend the oral examination, and s/he may participate in the discussion to the extent permitted by the examiners, but s/he shall withdraw prior to the deliberations of the examiners on the outcome of the examination.
- In cases where a supervisor is unable to be present and the candidate wishes to be accompanied in the viva, arrangements should be made for a member of academic staff with supervisory experience to be present, and the inclusion of the academic staff must be approved by all parties.
- v) Appointment of Independent Chairs
An independent non-examining Chair for all oral examinations shall be appointed by the Director of UR CPGS, on the recommendation of the School Dean.
- vi) Ratification of Examiners' Recommendations
The School Council shall make a decision on the reports and recommendation(s) of the examiners in respect of the candidate.
- vii) Examiners' Final Reports
After the Oral Examination, the examiners' final reports shall be submitted not later than two weeks after the date of the oral examination. Each examiner shall submit on the appropriate form a final report and recommendation relating to the award of the degree to the Director of UR CPGS with a copy to the School Postgraduate Coordinator. The preliminary and final reports with recommendations of the examiners shall together provide sufficiently detailed comments on the scope and quality of the work.

The School Postgraduate Coordinator shall then prepare a consolidated report with an appropriate recommendation on the award of the degree, to the School Council. An external examiner may be replaced if s/he delays in submitting the report for more than 6 weeks during which time three reminders should be sent.

- v) Exemption from oral or arrangement of alternative examination
A candidate shall normally be examined orally on the programme of work and on the field of study within which the programme lies. Where for reasons of sickness, disability or comparable valid cause, the Director of UR CPGS is satisfied that a candidate would be under serious disadvantage if required to undergo an oral examination, an alternative form of examination may be approved with the written permission of the DVC-AAR. Such approval shall not be given on the grounds that the candidate's knowledge of the language in which the thesis is presented is inadequate.
- vi) Conduct of examinations
The Director of UR CPGS shall ensure that all examinations are conducted and the recommendations of the examiners are presented wholly in accordance with the institution's regulations and Code of Practice for Research *viva voce* examinations. In any instance where the Director of UR CPGS is made aware of a failure to comply with all the procedures of the examination process, he/she may declare the examination null and void and appoint new examiners.

3.5.3.4.5. Candidate's Temporary Absence from *viva voce*

- i) Permission for temporary absence
Examiners may, if circumstances warrant, and they are in agreement, permit a candidate to be absent temporarily from a *viva voce*.
- ii) Candidate accompanied
When leaving a *viva voce* venue, candidates shall be accompanied by the internal examiner or the School Postgraduate Coordinator.
- iii) Time limit for temporary absence
Candidates will normally be allowed up to 20 minutes' absence before returning to the *viva voce* venue.
- iv) Circumstances for temporary absence
A candidate may request permission to leave a *viva voce* venue, or for the viva to be halted under the following circumstances:
- a) Illness
1. If a candidate is taken ill during a *viva*, an examiner must contact the College Registrar and Director of Student Welfare so that arrangements may be made for appropriate action to be taken and first aid advice obtained if necessary.
 2. The School Postgraduate Coordinator shall inform the Dean and Director of UR CPGS
- b) For personal reasons
A candidate wishing to leave the examination room for any other urgent reason (e.g. to visit the toilet).

When a candidate visits the toilet, the person accompanying the candidate must ensure, as far as possible, that the candidate does not have access to unauthorised material and does not communicate with any other person.

c) Other cases of absence from the *viva voce*

1. In the event of a candidate withdrawing from the examination room for reasons other than b) above, the examiners shall contact the School Postgraduate Coordinator who shall come to the examination room for a briefing on the events.
2. The School Postgraduate Coordinator shall try to find the candidate and to elicit the reason for the absence and report the circumstances to the examiners.
3. The School Postgraduate Coordinator and the examiners shall try to encourage the candidate to return to the examination room.
4. The School Postgraduate Coordinator shall inform the Dean and Director of UR CPGS.

v) Recommencement of the *viva voce*

When the candidate returns to the examination room, the examiners shall ensure that the candidate is at ease and must summarise the last question answered, to help reset the agenda

vi) Failure to return to the *viva voce*

Failure to return to the *viva voce* shall not in itself cause a candidate to fail for the award of the degree for which the candidate is being examined.

However, if the candidate fails to return within the deadline, or leaves without the unanimous agreement of the examiners, the examiners may act as follows:

- a. Recommend that the remaining part of the *viva voce* be dispensed with if they are satisfied that a recommendation on the award can be made in accordance with Regulations
- b. Recommend that the viva be rearranged within one month, *or*
- c. Deem the candidate to have failed the *viva voce* and require that a further *viva voce* be rearranged within one month.

vii) Rearrangement of *viva voce*

- a. In the case of 3.5.3.3.5 vi) b) a record must be made so that the examiners can refer back to the earlier discussion and take note of it during the reconvened *viva voce*.
- b. In the case of 3.5.3.3.5 vi) c) and subject to Regulation 3.5.3.3.4 vi) (*Exemption from Oral*), a rearranged viva will be conducted as if it is for the first time.

viii) Reporting of incidents

The circumstances of any illness, or other reason for leaving the examination room, including the duration of any absence, must be



reported in the Examiners' Report Form on the Recommendations for the *viva voce*.

3.5.3.4.6. Re-examination

i) Criteria and deadlines

One re-examination may be permitted by the School Council, subject to the following conditions:

- a) A candidate who fails to satisfy the examiners at the first examination, including where appropriate the oral or approved alternative examination may, on the recommendation of the examiners and with the approval of School Council, be permitted to revise the thesis and be re-examined;
- b) The examiners shall provide the candidate, through Director of UR CPGS with a written guidance on the deficiencies of the first submission; and the candidate shall submit for re-examination within the period of one calendar year from the date of the latest part of the first examination. Where the College Academic Council has dispensed with the oral examination, the re-examination shall take place within one calendar year of the date of this dispensation. The Director of UR CPGS may, where there are good reasons, approve an extension of this period.

ii) Appointment of additional examiner

The School Council may require that an additional external examiner be appointed for the re-examination.

iii) Forms of re-examination

There shall be four cases of re-examination:

- a) Where the candidate's performance in the first oral or approved alternative examination was satisfactory, but the thesis was unsatisfactory and the examiners on re-examination certify that the thesis as revised is satisfactory, the School Council may exempt the candidate from further examination, oral or otherwise.
- b) Where the candidate's performance in the first oral or approved alternative examination was unsatisfactory and the thesis was also unsatisfactory, any re-examination shall include a re-examination of the thesis and an oral or approved alternative examination.
- c) Where on the first examination, the candidate's thesis was so unsatisfactory that the College Academic Council dispensed with the oral examination, any re-examination shall include a re-examination of the thesis and an oral or approved alternative examination
- d) Where on the first examination, the candidate's thesis was satisfactory, but the performance in the oral and/or other examination(s) was not satisfactory the candidate shall be re-examined in the oral and/or other examination(s) without being requested to revise and re-submit the thesis.

iv) Examiners' confidential independent preliminary reports on re-examination

In the case of a re-examination under sub-paragraphs 3.5.3.3.6 iv) a), b) or c), each examiner shall read and examine the thesis and submit,

on the appropriate form, an independent preliminary report on it to the Director of UR CPGS, before any oral or alternative form of examination is held. In completing the preliminary report, each examiner shall consider whether the thesis provisionally satisfies the requirements of the degree and where possible, make an appropriate provisional recommendation subject to the outcome of any oral examination.

Except where otherwise authorised by the examiners, the content of the reports shall be known only to the examiners and (following the oral examination) and the Director of UR CPGS

v) Examiners' final report on re-examination

Following the re-examination of the thesis, each examiner shall prepare her/his final report and recommendation relating to the award of the degree and submit it to the Director of UR CPGS on the appropriate form. The reports of the examiners shall provide sufficiently detailed comments on the scope and quality of the work. The Director of UR CPGS shall then prepare a consolidated report with an appropriate recommendation on the award of the degree, to the College Academic Council.

vi) Examiners' recommendations following a re-examination

Following the completion of the re-examination, the examiners may recommend that:

- a) The candidate be awarded the degree
- b) The candidate be awarded the degree subject to amendments being made to the thesis
- c) The candidate not be awarded the degree, and not be permitted to be re-examined

vii) Amendments following a re-examination

Where the examiners are satisfied that the candidate has reached the standard required for the degree, but consider that the candidate's thesis requires amendments and corrections that are not so substantial as to warrant the submission of a considerably revised thesis (which in the context of a re-examination would constitute a failure), and recommend that the degree be awarded subject to the candidate amending the thesis to the satisfaction of the supervisor(s), they shall indicate to the candidate in writing what amendments and corrections are required.

Amendments constitute spelling or typing errors, minor textual corrections, reordering of material, or additional paragraphs for further clarification of the research, but not requiring further research to be undertaken.

The time limit for submission of amendments shall be at the discretion of the examiners, subject to a maximum of 2 months, and should not be used as criteria for determining what constitutes such amendments.

The candidate shall submit the amended thesis within the time limit specified by the examiners from the date of delivery to the candidate of the list of amendments and corrections required

- viii) Non-unanimous recommendations following re-examination
Where the examiners' recommendations are not unanimous, the School Council shall require an appointment of an additional external examiner.
- ix) Appointment of additional external examiner following re-examination
Where an additional external examiner is appointed, s/he shall prepare an independent preliminary report on the basis of the thesis and, if considered necessary, may conduct a further oral examination. This examiner should not be informed of the recommendations of the other examiners. On receipt of the report from the additional examiner, the Director of UR CPGS shall complete the examination.
- x) Recommendation for failure without oral re-examination
In the case of a re-examination where an oral examination has already been held and the examiners are of the opinion that the thesis is so unsatisfactory, it shall be recommend to the UR Senate to dispense with the oral examination and not award the degree.
- xi) Notification of deficiencies of the thesis following re-examination
Where the College Academic Council decides that the degree shall not be awarded, the examiners shall prepare an agreed statement of the deficiencies of the thesis and the reason for their recommendation, which shall be forwarded to the candidate by the Director of UR CPGS

3.5.3.4.7. Final submission requirements

- i) Thesis copies
Prior to receiving a degree complete confirmation, the candidate must submit to Director of UR CPGS, through the School Postgraduate Coordinator, the required number of copies of the thesis in hard copy and soft copy (in PDF) formats. The Director of UR CPGS shall lodge one set of the thesis in the University Library and in the library of any collaborating establishment.
- ii) Binding of final copies of thesis (see the guidelines as approved by UR Senate)
- iii) Confidentiality agreements
Where the College Academic Council has agreed that the confidential nature of the candidate's work is such as to preclude the thesis being made freely available in the library of the university, the thesis shall, immediately on completion of the programme of work, be retained by

the university on restricted access and, for a time not exceeding the approved period, shall only be made available to those who were directly involved in the project.

The College Academic Council shall normally only approve an application for confidentiality in order to enable a patent application to be lodged or to protect commercially or politically sensitive material. A thesis shall not be restricted in this way in order to protect research leads. While the normal maximum period of confidentiality is two years, in exceptional circumstances the College Academic Council may approve a longer period. Where a shorter period would be adequate, the College Academic Council shall not automatically grant confidentiality for two years.

3.5.3.4.8. Grading System for Doctoral Thesis component

i) The Doctoral Thesis shall be graded as follows:

Approved with Distinction	The thesis is ambitious of internationally exceptionally high scientific level and the work is especially meritorious. The work is characterized by independence and certainty. The thesis contains new and significant scientific findings in its area of research.
Approved	The thesis has, according to the evaluation criteria, distinct merits that compensate for some possible deficiencies. The dissertation contains new scientific findings in its area of research. The concepts and language used are clear and the doctoral candidate has a good command of the subject.
Rejected	There are significant deficiencies in the theoretical basis, methods or empirical part of the dissertation/thesis and the work does not meet the ethical standards of research.

ii) The UR CPGS shall develop rubrics to be used to evaluate the thesis. Evaluation elements should include (but not limited to) the following:

1. Extent to which the research results achieved by the candidate are of international importance.
2. Extent to which the observations and conclusions are novel or significantly change earlier perceptions.
3. Clear evidence of the candidate's own research contribution in the case where the thesis includes co-authored publications or manuscripts
4. Performance of the doctoral candidate and the scientific maturity shown during the oral examination.

5. If the examiners recommend a doctoral thesis to be accepted with the grade “Approved with distinction”, they must include a summary of the merits on which their recommendation is based.

3.5.3.4.9. Grading System for the Master’s dissertation component

- i) The master’s dissertation shall be graded as A – Excellent, B – Very Good, C- Satisfactory, F - Fail.
- ii) The UR CPGS shall develop rubrics to be used to evaluate the thesis. Evaluation elements should include (but not limited to) the following:
 - 1. Extent to the insight into the scientific theory and methods and demonstrated scientific knowledge.
 - 2. Well defined and clear objectives
 - 3. The level of the candidate’s ability to select and apply relevant scientific methods convincingly.
 - 4. The candidate’s level of possession of technical skills required for the work.
 - 5. The candidate’s level of ability to plan and conduct advanced experiments or computations.
 - 6. Extent to which the candidate works independently in cooperation with a supervisor.
 - 7. How thorough the dissertation is.
 - 8. Extent to which the dissertation contains new knowledge and innovative contribution.
 - 9. Extent to which the analysis and discussion have scientific foundation and justification and how relevant to the topic that is addressed.
 - 10. Extent to which the candidate demonstrates critical reflection and distinguishes between his/her contributions and the contributions from others.
 - 11. The level of the form, structure and language in the dissertation.

3.5.3.5 Award of PhD by completed body of work

Candidates may obtain a PhD on the basis of previously completed or published work. This is a retrospective assessment of the work submitted, of the research methodology employed in its creation, and assessment of its context in relation to the developing state of the art in the subject concerned.

A PhD by Completed Body of Work shall be awarded under the following conditions:

- i) Entry qualifications
To be eligible to register for a PhD by this mode, candidates must meet the normal entry requirements for PhD, and normally have at least five years’ relevant experience at postgraduate level

- ii) Prima facie case
The School Selection Committee shall initially establish whether the candidate has a *prima facie* case for the award of a PhD as applied for.
- iii) Appointment of an adviser/Mentor
The School Council shall approve an Adviser/Mentor, normally based in the School, who shall have specialist knowledge of the subject concerned and who has had experience of supervising candidates to successful completion of a PhD as appropriate. The role of the Adviser shall be to guide the candidate in preparing her/his work for submission, give guidance on how to construct the arguments, ensure that the submission is in accordance with the format required by UR Senate and advise on fulfilling the requirements of the Qualifications Framework.
- iv) Deadline for submission
Final submissions must be made within 12 months and not exceeding two years from the date on which the relevant School Committee ratifies the recommendation that a *prima facie* case exists for PhD by Completed Body of Work.
- v) Content of submission
The submitted work should normally consist of one or more of the following (in published or unpublished form):
- a. a completed book;
 - b. papers or articles in refereed journals which are published or 'accepted for publications';
 - c. substantial or sole contribution to a book;
 - d. chapters in books;
 - e. papers presented to conferences which are available in the published proceedings of the conference;
 - f. published data sets, granted patents or creative artefacts;
 - g. Exhibitions or performances of which a permanent record has been made.

The work submitted must constitute a coherent whole and must incorporate an Abstract, Introduction and Conclusion which together put the total work submitted into context, and may also involve the writing of intermediate connecting passages. Where papers form the body of the submission, the adviser and candidate may wish to consider the number of papers that are required to accomplish this objective.

Co-authored work may form part of the submission, but the candidate must include an account of the extent and scope of his or her own contribution to such work, signed, if possible, by the co-author(s). The additional material, which forms part of the submission over and above

the previously completed work, must be the candidate's original and individual production.

vi) Format of submission

The Director of UR CPGS may, as appropriate, accept for examination a wholly published version or require that the work be submitted in the form of a thesis. In either case, the copies submitted for examination shall remain the property of the institution but the copyright shall be vested in the candidate or other previous holder.

The work submitted for PhD must constitute an independent and original contribution to knowledge. The work submitted for PhD should not have been previously submitted for any other award.

vii) Academic standards

The academic standards associated with the degree of PhD by Completed Work shall be the same as those that apply to the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) by traditionally approved programme of supervised research.

viii) Assessment of submission

- a. The submitted work shall be assessed by a team of at least two examiners, one of whom must be external, appointed by the Principal, on the recommendation of the School Council, in accordance with the higher degree regulations. The examination will be in accordance with sections B5.3.3
- b. The examiners may recommend that:
 1. The candidate be awarded the degree
 2. The candidate be permitted to revise the contextualisation component of the work and resubmit for the degree and be re-examined within 12 months, with or without an oral examination
 3. the candidate not be awarded the degree and not be permitted to be re-examined, or
- c. Where the examiners recommend under sub-clause b) 3) that the degree be not awarded, the candidate may not re-submit for PhD by completed work within a period of three years from the date of the original examination in the case of PhD. Any further submission must include evidence of additional work.

3.5.4. Award under exceptional circumstances

Aegrotat Awards.

An aegrotat degree may be awarded on the basis of a thesis completed by a candidate, which is ready for submission for examination, but where the candidate, for reasons of



illness or other valid cause, is unable to proceed with examination. In such cases, the College Academic Council shall seek evidence that the candidate would have been likely to succeed, or, would have been able to successfully address any amendments required by the examiner, had the oral examination taken place. If no other evidence is available, then the supervisory team might be invited to make an oral or written submission on the candidate's behalf.

In these circumstances, the student (or her/his parent, spouse or other appropriate individual) must have signified that s/he is willing to accept the award, and must acknowledge that acceptance of such an award implies waiver of the possibility of re-assessment. Aegrotat awards will be listed as one of the following:

- i) Aegrotat Masters
- ii) Aegrotat PhD

3.5.5. Review of an Examination Decision

A candidate may, in certain circumstances, request a review of an examination decision. Such a review may be requested only in relation to a decision of Senate after consideration of the recommendation of the College Academic Council.



Prof. Nelson Ijumba
Deputy Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Research