

MBARARA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY



Postgraduate Handbook

2017

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Abbreviations

DC:	Doctoral Committee
DRGT:	Directorate of Research and Graduate Training
FRC:	Faculty Research Committee
MUST:	Mbarara University of Science and Technology
MUST REC:	MUST Research Ethics Committee
NCHE:	National Council for Higher Education
PhD:	Doctor of Philosophy
UNCST:	Uganda National Council for Science and Technology

Forward: Academic Registrar

Dear Postgraduate Student

Thank you for choosing to study at Mbarara University of Science and Technology (MUST). You are most welcome, and I congratulate you for having been admitted onto your programme.

The office of Academic Registrar is mandated under the Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions Act (UOTIA), sec. 34(3) to assist the first Deputy Vice-Chancellor (AA) in the administration and organization of all academic matters including admission, undergraduate studies, postgraduate studies, examinations, research and publication.

In order to attend to graduate students closely, the University Council set up a Directorate of Research and Graduate Training to handle all postgraduate academic matters namely postgraduate admissions, postgraduate studies, postgraduate examinations, research and publication. The Academic Registrar's office therefore works closely with the Director of Research and Graduate Training and Faculty Deans to ensure that you are assisted to complete your programme successfully as you go through all the academic processes.

This handbook contains information to guide you through your programme from application to graduation. The regulations herein have been approved by the University Senate therefore any changes shall be authorized by the Senate. Kindly note that the guidelines from National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) and other MUST guidelines apply.

If you need any assistance regarding the interpretation and implementation of the regulations, your first point of contact is the office of Directorate of Research and Graduate Training who may refer you to the Academic Registrar for assistance.

The motto of MUST is Succeed We MUST; we therefore pledge to help you succeed in your studies.

Thank you.

Martha Kyoshaba Twinamasiko
ACADEMIC REGISTRAR

Forward: Director, DRGT

Dear Postgraduate Student,

Welcome to Mbarara University of Science and Technology Directorate of Research and Graduate Training (DGRT).

The DRGT has a mandate to provide a home, manage and coordinate graduate programmes, providing enabling environment for quality graduate training, nurturing a culture of excellence in cutting edge research as well as communication of research outputs. Currently the graduate programmes offered include: Postgraduate Diplomas, Masters and Doctoral Degrees. Our graduate programmes are designed to be responsive, challenging and innovative. For Postgraduate Diploma and Master's students, you are about to discover that graduate study is different from your undergraduate experience. Instead of taking coursework from a broad range of disciplines, you will have a much narrower and deeper focus.

Your intellectual life at MUST will largely revolve around the curriculum and the Faculty of the programme that you have selected. You will have an opportunity to work with Faculty members as supervisors one-on-one to guide in focusing your studies. Graduate programmes require individual initiative but with guidance, you will be responsible for your own progress toward the degree. DRGT is making every effort to ensure that you get the highest quality level of training and guidance. As a graduate student at MUST, you will find yourself breaking new intellectual ground and contributing to academic conversations in your field.

You will find in this Handbook the information regarding MUST graduate programmes. However, you are free to consult DRGT, Academic Registrar, Faculty and Department as you make decisions about your academic career.

I am proud of the quality and diversity of graduate programmes offered at MUST. We strive to be a destination of choice for highly qualified graduate students by providing relevant and rigorous research and professional programmes that are designed to develop scholars of the discipline and scholars of the profession. Make the most of your time here as you advance your career goals.

I wish you the best of luck in your graduate studies.

SUCCEED WE MUST

Associate Professor Vincent Batwala

**DIRECTOR
DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH AND GRADUATE TRAINING**

1 UNIVERSITY INFORMATION

1.1 University Vision

To be a centre of academic and professional excellence in Science and Technology.

1.2 University Mission

To provide quality and relevant education at national and international levels with emphasis on science and technology and its application to community development.

1.3 Location

Mbarara University of Science and Technology (MUST) is located in Mbarara Municipality, 2km from the centre of the Municipality along Kabale road, and the Main Campus at Kihumuro Hill, 7km on Mbarara-Bushenyi-Fort Portal highway, next to Mbarara Stock Farm.

2 ADMISSION PROCEDURE

2.1 Application Procedure

- i) Adverts for postgraduate programmes are placed in Newspapers and at MUST website whenever vacancies are available. The deadline for receiving Masters and Postgraduate Diploma applications is normally indicated in the adverts. PhD applications are received continuously throughout the year.
- ii) Applications are received through the online application portal (<https://applications.must.ac.ug/>) or a hard copy delivered to MUST DRGT.

2.2 Application Forms at MUST

Application forms can be obtained from and returned to:
Directorate of Research and Graduate Training,
Mbarara University of Science and Technology,
Plot 5B Upper Circular Road, Booma,
P O Box 1410, Mbarara,
Email: drgt@must.ac.ug

2.3 Online Application

Apply online at: <https://applications.must.ac.ug>
Application forms can also be downloaded from MUST website: www.must.ac.ug

2.4 Payment of Application Fees

Payment of application fees can be made to:

Bank: Barclays Bank of Uganda Limited
Account Title: Mbarara University /Academic Registrar
Account Number: 6000592666
Bank Branch: Barclays, Mbarara
Swift Code: BARCUGKX

Bank: Stanbic Bank Uganda Limited
Account Title: Mbarara University AR
Account Number: 9030005647524
Swift Code: SBICUGKX

2.5 Admission Requirements

2.5.1 Postgraduate Diploma and Masters Programmes

Applicants must have an honors degree or its equivalent from a recognized degree-awarding institution. In addition, they must have had the minimum entry requirements for the undergraduate degree programme as recommended by the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE). That is Uganda Certificate of Education (UCE) with at least five passes and at least two principal passes at Uganda Advanced Certificate of Education (UACE) or its equivalent. Ugandan applicants for clinical disciplines must be registered with the Uganda Medical and Dental Practitioners Council and must have a valid Annual Practising License. Visit the Uganda Medical and Dental Practitioners Council at <http://www.umdpc.com/>. International applicants (see section 2.5.5).

2.5.2 Doctorate by Research and Thesis or by Coursework and Dissertation

Applicants must have a master's degree and bachelor's degree from a recognized degree-awarding institution and a research concept paper. In addition, they must have had the minimum entry requirements for the undergraduate degree programme as recommended by the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE). That is Uganda Certificate of Education (UCE) with at least five passes and at least two principal passes at Uganda Advanced Certificate of Education (UACE) or its equivalent. Clinicians must be registered with the Uganda Medical and Dental Practitioners Council and must have a valid Annual Practising License. Visit the Uganda Medical and Dental Practitioners Council at <http://www.umdpc.com/>

2.5.3 Process of admitting applicants

i) Masters and postgraduate diploma

- a) Applicants submit filled applications to Directorate of Research and Graduate Training (DRGT).
- b) Application documents are assessed for completeness.
- c) Documents are forwarded to respective Faculties to assess suitability of applicants.
- d) The DRGT Board convenes to consider applications returned by Faculties.
- e) The university Admissions Committee then admits applicants basing on DRGT Board recommendations.

ii) PhD Application

- a) Potential students submit filled applications to DRGT.
- b) Applications are assessed for completeness and whether they meet the doctoral degree entry requirements
- a) Applications that meet the entry requirements are sent to Faculties/Departments.
- b) Faculties invite applicants to make a presentation of the research concept in the Department at which a decision is made regarding the proposed research and a minimum of two suitable supervisors.
- c) Members of the Doctoral Committee (including supervisors) shall be identified during presentation of the concept.
- d) The application package plus minutes generated during concept presentation, profiles and commitment letters of at least two supervisors, names of members to constitute the Doctoral Committee (see section 10.2) and a cover letter are returned to DRGT through the Faculty Dean.
- e) DRGT Board convenes to consider the Faculty recommendations; and present to the University Admissions Committee for Provisional Admission.
- f) A successful PhD applicant shall be given Provisional Admission valid for 12 months during which a full proposal shall be developed. Supervisors (at least two) and members of the Doctoral Committee shall be indicated on the admission letter. The “Full Admission” letter shall be issued after fulfilling the relevant programme requirements and successfully defending the proposal.

2.5.4 Specific Admission Requirements

In addition to the minimum entry requirements, there are specific admission requirements for each programme. The details of which are captured in the respective programme descriptions.

2.5.5 International Students

In addition to standard entry requirements:

- i) International applicants should have qualifications that are recognized for university entry in Uganda.
- ii) If transcripts are not in English, they must be translated, signed and certified as true copies by the academic authorities of the institution of origin.
- iii) It is the duty of foreign applicants to submit academic documents to NCHE for verification and equating of their qualifications.
- iv) All prospective international students whose national language is not English must submit evidence of proficiency in the English language.
- v) International applicants for clinical disciplines shall apply to the Uganda Medical and Dental Practitioners Council for Registration and Practicing License at the time of registering at MUST to enable them to practice and treat patients in the hospital. The Practicing License is renewed annually. Visit the Uganda Medical and Dental Practitioners Council at <http://www.umdpc.com/>

2.5.6 Accepting or Declining the offer of Admission

- i) Admitted applicants are required to pay a non-refundable tuition fee deposit before they pick the admission letters. The fee paid is prescribed by the University Council and indicated on the admission letter.
- ii) Any admitted applicant, who, for some reason is unable to take up the place or register by the end of the registration period, is advised to re-apply for admission and shall compete afresh with the applicants for that academic year.

2.5.7 Change of Academic Programme

- i. A student may be permitted to change from one Academic Programme to another on condition that:-
 - a) He/she has paid and registered for the course that has been offered to him/her.
 - b) He/she satisfies the admission requirements for the desired Academic Programme.
 - c) The old programme (programme being changed from) and the desired programme are operationalized within the same unit and sharing similar core subjects/courses other than cross cutting courses.
 - d) He/she submits a filled “Change of programme request form” to DRGT through the Faculty Dean of the old and the desired programme copying the Academic Registrar.
 - e) He/she should not have been attending lectures/tutorials and other academic activities of the Academic Programme he/she would want to change from for more than one-half of the duration of the programme.
 - f) He/she had not been previously dismissed on disciplinary grounds from MUST.
 - g) DRGT forwards the “application to change programme materials” to the respective faculty for assessment and recommendation.
- ii. A student permitted to change the programme may be allowed to transfer the Credits from the previous Academic Programme to the new Academic Programme, provided that the Credits being transferred are relevant to the new programme.
- iii. Application for change of programme attracts a charge that is communicated to the student at application.
- iv. The University does encourage students to change from the programmes they were enrolled on to another. Therefore, not all students who apply for change of programme will be permitted.

2.5.8 Guidelines for Transfer of Credits

A candidate who wishes to transfer credits from another institution of Higher Learning to MUST shall make a formal application to DRGT. The application shall be reviewed by the Faculty to establish suitability of the candidate before it is considered by DRGT Board, and consequently the Admissions Committee. The guidelines shall include the following:

- i. Must satisfy the admission requirements for the academic programme(s) applied for.
- ii. Must obtain and submit an official academic transcript from a recognized University in which he/she was previously enrolled, indicating his/her academic status, the courses offered/taken, the credit units completed and the grades obtained in each course.
- iii. Must have obtained the equivalent of Cumulative Grade Point Average of at least 3.0.
- iv. Will be permitted to transfer the credits earned but the maximum of credits should not exceed 40% of the minimum graduation load of the academic programme applied for.
- v. If permitted to transfer she/he should not be allowed to transfer the equivalent of credit units in a course in which she/he obtained a Grade point lower than 3.0
- vi. An application must be accompanied by a recommendation from the university the student is transferring from.

2.5.9 Re-admission after Discontinuation due to weak academic performance

A candidate who wishes to be re-admitted after discontinuation shall go through the normal application process as hereunder:

- i. A student in this category may be permitted to re-apply to another programme and compete with other applicants for re-admission into first year.
- ii. A student who applies and gains re-admission after being discontinued due to weak academic performance will be permitted to transfer Credits earned from previous Academic Programmes. The transferred credits should be from the courses which are relevant to the new programme.
- iii. A student who was discontinued or dismissed from studies because of examination irregularities shall not be considered for re-admission.

3 PAYMENT OF FEES

- i. Fees payment is governed by MUST Fees Payment Policy approved by the University Council (<http://www.must.ac.ug/policy/fees-policy>). The fees payment schedule shall be as follows:
- ii. Failure to pay the fees as prescribed may lead to discontinuation of studies.
- iii. All fees are paid in designated MUST bank accounts.

- iv. National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) fees are directly paid as per Bank instructions below:

Account Name: National Council for Higher Education
Account No.: 0140015191503
Bank: Stanbic,
Branch: Kyambogo

4 REGISTRATION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS

4.1 Registration process

- i. Applicants admitted for postgraduate studies shall be registered if they are in possession of an admission letter, have the required academic documents and have duly paid all University fees according to the fees policy (<http://www.must.ac.ug/policy/fees-policy>).
- ii. Registration shall initially be carried out at Academic Registrar's Department and DRGT at the time of reporting. Registration may also be done online.
- iii. It is mandatory for every student to register within three (3) weeks at the beginning of the first semester to be able to access the University facilities or services.
- iv. The names in which a student will be registered shall be those which appear on the academic documents which the student used as entry qualifications.
- v. Registration is completed when the student signs the MUST Rules and Regulations governing postgraduate students.
- vi. After initial registration, students will be required to sign up for their respective courses every semester using the university Academic Information Management System available.
- vii. Fully registered students shall be issued a University Smart Identity Card for the duration of the programme.
- viii. An orientation and induction for registered postgraduate students shall be organized and conducted at the beginning of the academic year by each Faculty and DRGT.
- ix. It is the responsibility of each postgraduate student to attend the orientation programme.
- x. Students in taught programmes are required to attend all prescribed classes, including lectures, practical classes, demonstrations, seminars and tutorials. Respective Faculties will provide the necessary guidance on how to attend.
- xi. Any first year student who will not have registered within the first 3 weeks of beginning of the academic year shall be deemed to have declined the offer of a place at the University. His/her place shall accordingly be offered to another student.
- xii. Annual registration for continuing students is mandatory within the first three (3) weeks of first semester throughout the period the student spends on the programme including those on research.
- xiii. A continuing student renewing registration after defaulting shall pay for all those years he/she defaulted while on the program.

5 DURATION OF POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMMES

5.1.1 Postgraduate Diploma Programmes

A one year postgraduate diploma programme shall last for a minimum period of two semesters and a maximum of four semesters.

5.1.2 Masters Degree Programmes

In non-clinical disciplines, the two years masters degree programmes shall last for a minimum period of four semesters and a maximum of eight semesters. In clinical disciplines, the three years masters programmes shall last for a minimum period of six semesters and a maximum of ten semesters.

5.1.2 Doctoral programs

Doctoral studies shall last for a minimum period of six semesters and a maximum of ten semesters.

5.2 Progress Report

- i. All postgraduate students shall provide six-monthly progress reports through their supervisor(s) and Head of Department.
- ii. A standard form (Appendix A) for submission of progress reports shall be used by all postgraduate students.

6 EXTENSION OF REGISTRATION, WITHDRAW, DE-REGISTRATION

6.1.1 Extension of Registration

- i. If a student realizes that he/she cannot complete the studies within the time allowed, it is his/her duty to take the initiative to apply for extension of registration. The application for extension shall be addressed to DRGT Director through the Supervisor, Head of Department and Faculty Dean and must include the following:
 - a) Duration of the extension stating the date of commencement (day after the end of the valid study period) and date of completion.
 - b) Justification for extension, attaching evidence if applicable.
 - c) A description of a full completion work plan for the extension period approved by the main supervisor.
 - d) Recommendation from the Doctoral Committee duly endorsed by the Head of Department and Dean/Director of the Faculty/Institute.
 - e) Copies of all the six-monthly progress reports.
- ii. Such a request shall be considered by DRGT upon receipt of application materials, and shall be recommended to Senate to grant permission for extension.

- iii. Subsequent extensions of periods not exceeding one academic year each shall only be granted if the justification for such a request is exceptional. If the justification for the subsequent request for extension is not strong enough, the candidate may be recommended for discontinuation.
- iv. When the extension request is granted, the student shall re-register at the time of resuming studies and shall pay the full extension fees.

6.1.2 Timing of extension of Registration and Charges

Extension of registration is required at the end of 1st year of registration for the one-year Postgraduate Diploma students; at the end of 2nd year in the case of the two-year Master's degree students and after 3 years for PhD full time students and Master of Medicine students. Extension charges include:

- i. Calculated fees based on period requested for and the remaining workload to complete the studies.
- ii. Functional fees.

6.2 Dead Year

A registered student may formerly prospectively request for a dead year for various reasons:

- i) If a candidate finds that he/she cannot continue with the studies due to financial or social hardships which can be demonstrated to affect their candidature, but expects to complete studies at a later date, it is his/her duty to write to Director DRGT prospectively requesting for a dead year. The letter of request shall be endorsed by the supervisors, Head of Department and Dean, copied to Academic Registrar.
- ii) A student may apply for a dead year at any time of the semester, articulating the reasons for requesting the dead year, clearly stating the starting and return dates.
- iii) A student will be given one dead year at a time, and a maximum of two dead years on an Academic Programme.
- iv) A student on a dead year shall apply to DRGT through the supervisors, Head of Department and Faculty Dean to resume studies and shall indicate that the circumstances that made him/her request for a dead year no longer affect his/her studies.

6.3 Withdraw from studies

A registered student may submit a request to DRGT to withdraw from an academic programme due to various reasons. A privately sponsored student who has been permitted to withdraw from studies shall be refunded the tuition fees as stated in the MUST fees policy (<http://www.must.ac.ug/policy/fees-policy>), and shown below:

- | | |
|--|-----|
| - Within the first half of semester | 50% |
| - Within the second half of the semester | Nil |
| - Registration/Functional fees | Nil |

- i. In case a Programme to which a student has been admitted is not conducted in a particular academic year, the University shall refund full tuition fees paid by the student.
- ii. The University Council reserves the right to revise the fees any time with or without prior notice.
- iii. A student who is suspended, dismissed, or withdraws when under investigation for misconduct shall not have tuition refunded for the semester in which the action is taken.

6.4 Deregistration

MUST shall de-register students whose period of registration lapses. Any candidate who goes beyond the stipulated period of candidature gets automatic de-registration unless he or she has sound reasons that shall be considered by DRGT Board and recommended to Senate for action.

7 STUDENT FACILITIES

7.1 Library

The University Library is stocked with essential textbooks and print journals. The library is connected to internet for students to access electronic text books and journal articles.

7.2 Sports Facilities

There are facilities for volleyball, basket and net-ball within the University Town Campus. Additional sports facilities shall be developed at Kihumuro Main Campus. Excellent facilities for athletics and football exist at the nearby Kakyeka Stadium.

7.3 Halls of Residence

All postgraduate students are required to be non-resident. They reside in premises owned by private developers near the university. The University Housing Overseer may be consulted regarding the best and safe premises.

7.4 Students' Property

The University urges students to exercise great care as regards custody of personal property. The University does not hold itself responsible for any loss of students' property.

7.5 University Health Service

Free medical services are provided at the University Clinic. Expensive/ specialized procedures including dentures are not covered. Students should come with some money in case they are advised to pay.

9 COURSEWORK

- i. In non-clinical masters degree programs, the first two semesters shall mainly be used for coursework. Research proposal development may be integrated with coursework at the time when the Research Methods course unit is given. The proposal shall be approved by the relevant Faculty Committees and MUST Research Ethics Committee (MUST REC) in the third semester of the programme. For the 6-semester clinical disciplines, coursework and clinical shall be spread across five semesters. Special lectures or tutorials shall be arranged at any time during the programme depending on availability of visiting professors. Research proposal development shall start in third semester (integrated with coursework) or at the time when Research Methods course unit is given. Departments with proposal development as a course unit shall proceed as described in their approved curricula. The proposal shall be approved by the relevant committees by the end of fourth semester before commencement of data collection.
- ii. All doctoral students shall complete and pass the crosscutting courses; and relevant courses offered at the Faculties as advised by supervisors and Doctoral Committees. All crosscutting courses shall preferably be completed within the first two semesters of the programme.
- iii. A student pursuing a doctorate by course-work and thesis (the taught PhD) shall complete a number of course units that may vary by discipline. The student shall work with supervisor(s) to select appropriate optional courses from within and outside the Faculty. The student will then spend approximately two years engaging in research and writing the thesis under the guidance of the supervisor(s) and Doctoral Committee. The student is required to have minimum credit units as prescribed in the programme document in order to graduate.
- iv. As part of monitoring progress, a doctoral student shall present the research at least three times after initial registration on the programme. Presentations shall be scheduled at Department or Faculty levels and at PhD forum. A masters student shall present at least twice in the Department/Faculty or research seminar.
- v. Students are required to attend all prescribed classes (including lectures, practical, demonstrations, seminars, clinical sessions [for clinical disciplines], and tutorials) as instructed by the Faculties.
- vi. Each department shall submit the course results to Faculty Examiners Boards for onward submission to DRGT Board and Senate.

9.1 Examinations and Assessment

- i. Assessment shall take the following forms:-
 - a) Coursework: tests, practical, fieldwork, logbook, mid-semester assessment.
 - b) Final University examinations.
- ii. In clinical disciplines, the final university examinations shall apply for both the written and the clinical examinations. Each course unit as prescribed and described in the curricula is passed independently.
- iii. Coursework shall account for 40% of the final examination mark, while university examinations shall account for 60% of the final mark.

9.1.2 Marks Entry and Publication

Marks entry into the Academic Information Management system shall remain the responsibility of the lecturer in charge of the course unit. The following steps shall be followed:

Step 1: Lecturer enters student marks in the system.

Step 2: Head of Department approves the marks.

Step 3: Faculty Dean approves the marks.

Step 4: DRGT Board approves the marks.

Step 6: Academic Registrar approves the marks and publishes after Senate approval.

Step 7: Students can then view their marks.

9.1.3 Accessing Marks by Students

i. Login

A bonafied MUST student (enrolled, fully paid up, registered and signed up for courses) can access the results by following these steps in the system:

Login > My Classes > My Grades > Unofficial Transcripts

ii. When a student fails to Login or forgets the password

The student shall seek assistance from the Office of Computing Services.

iii. When all above steps are followed and the student still cannot see the results

Confirm that the student signed up for the semester courses. If yes, then the student should visit the Faculty Administrator in regard to the missing marks. If the student did not sign up for the courses and needs help to do so, visit DRGT and then Academic Registrar's IT office.

iv. Missing or wrong marks

The student should first seek guidance from the Faculty Administrator. If necessary, the student writes to the Director, DRGT through the Head of Department and Faculty Dean.

The Office of the Academic Registrar is the Custodian of marks after Senate approval but it does not enter and or edit individual student marks. However, should the student experience additional challenges with the marks, s/he shall be free to visit the Office of the Academic Registrar for further assistance.

9.1.4 Missing University Examinations

- i. A student who absents himself/herself from the University examination without a valid reason, shall not be allowed to proceed to the next academic year, until he/she has sat and passed the missed examination(s) when next offered.
- ii. A student who misses the University examination with a valid reason may be allowed to proceed to the next academic year but be allowed to sit and pass the paper(s) when next offered.

- iii. The missed exam shall not be approved if the student has not been in regular attendance, where attendance means having completed less than half of the assigned work.
- iv. The missed exam shall be included in a student's maximum Semester load. A student with two or more missed exams outstanding from a previous semester may be required to reduce the number of courses in which they are registered in order to accommodate the missed courses from previous semester(s).
- v. The grades obtained from the missed examination shall not be categorized as retake because the assessment(s) is for the first time.
- vi. Students shall be required to pay for missed examination and payment shall be made at the beginning of the semester.

9.1.5 Failure and Discontinuation

- i. A student who fails not more than two course(s) in a semester shall be allowed to proceed to next semester and shall be allowed to sit and pass the failed courses when next offered.
- ii. A student who fails up to 60% of the total taught courses offered in a particular academic year shall sit the failed courses when next offered.
- iii. A student who fails between 61% and 75% of the total taught courses in the academic year shall repeat the year.
- iv. A student who fails more than 75% of the total taught courses in a particular academic year shall be discontinued.
- v. A student who fails the repeated course examination(s) twice shall be discontinued.
- vi. A student who absconds from University Examinations without permission from competent authority for a period of more than one semester shall be discontinued.
- vii. A student who cheats during examinations or has plagiarized work shall be discontinued.
- viii. A student who exceeds the maximum duration allowed on the programme shall be discontinued.
- ix. Failure at a Clinical Examination – A student who fails the final clinical examination shall repeat the year. However, the marks obtained from non-clinical course units shall be kept.

9.1.6 Deferred examination

- i. A student who provides a credible reason for failure to complete coursework assessment or to attend an examination may be permitted to sit the deferred examination or other coursework assignment when the course(s) is next offered.
- ii. Students needing a deferred examination must submit applications to Faculty Dean. The application and supporting documents pertaining to the absence must be presented as

soon as the student is able, having regard to the circumstances underlying the absence, but not later than the beginning of the semester in which the examination is scheduled. Where the cause is an incapacitating illness, a student must present a Medical Statement from Mbarara Regional Referral Hospital. In other cases, including severe domestic affliction, adequate documentation must be provided to substantiate the reason for absence.

- iii. In the case of an approved application for a deferred final exam, the Dean shall inform the Department Chair responsible for the course of the approved deferred exam. The Department will notify the lecturer concerned.
- iv. A deferred exam shall not be approved if the student has not been in regular attendance in a course, where attendance means having completed less than half of the assigned work.
- v. A deferred examination shall be included in a student's maximum Semester load. A student with two or more deferred exams outstanding from a previous semester may be required to reduce the number of courses in which they are registered in order to accommodate the deferred courses from previous semester(s).
- vi. The grades obtained from a deferred examination shall not be categorized as retake because the assessment(s) is for the first time.
- vii. Students shall be required to pay for a deferred examination and payment shall be made at the beginning of the semester.

9.1.7 Retaking a Course or Courses

- i. A student may retake a course or courses when next offered again in order to improve his/her pass grade(s) if the pass grade(s) got at the first assessment in the course was low.
- ii. Students must register for the retake courses at the beginning of the academic year.
- iii. Where a student misses an examination for justified reasons; he/she should not be recorded as retake when he/she sits the examinations for the first time when next offered.
- iv. A student shall retake a course or courses when next offered again in order to obtain at least the pass mark (60%) if he/she had failed during the first assessment in the course.
- v. Candidates are allowed only three (3) times to sit for a paper. A candidate who fails the course on the third attempt shall be discontinued.
- vi. A student who has failed to obtain at least 60% during the second assessment in the same course he/she has retaken shall be recommended by the Faculty Examiners Board to receive a warning from the Director, DRGT.
- vii. Candidates who fail a retake course, must not proceed. They must retake the course and pass it.

- viii. While retaking a course or courses, the student shall:
- a) Attend all prescribed lectures/ tutorials/ clinical /practical / fieldwork;
 - b) Satisfy all requirements for the coursework component in the course(s); and
 - c) Sit for the University Examinations in the course or courses.
- ix. A student shall not be allowed to accumulate more than two (2) retake courses at a time.
- x. Students are required to sign up for retake course(s) first before registering for new courses offered in that semester and the retake courses should fit into the approved normal load so as to avoid timetable clashes.
- xi. A final year student whose final examination results have already been approved by the relevant Faculty Board and has qualified for the Award of a Degree/Diploma/Certificate, shall not be permitted to retake any course.
- xii. When a student has retaken a course the better of the two grades obtained in that course shall be used in the computation of Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA).
- xiii. Whenever a Course has been retaken, the Academic Transcript shall indicate so.
- xiv. Continuing students who have a course(s) to retake and these course(s) fall beyond the set normal semester load for their academic programmes shall pay retake fees for any course to be retaken and the re-examination fees, per course retaken.

9.1.8 Cost for Retaking an Examination

- i. Students who do not complete their studies on time and still have courses to retake shall pay functional fees; plus a specified unit cost for each retake.
- ii. Students who proceed to the next academic year with retake courses shall be required to pay a specified unit cost for the retake but not pay additional functional fees.

9.1.9 Grievances and Appeals

i. Award of Marks

Course examiners retain the primary responsibility for awarding marks. The Examiner's judgment remains final unless compelling evidence shows discrimination, differential treatment or procedural irregularities.

ii. Reporting Grievances

It is the obligation of the aggrieved student(s) to report the grievance first to the Head of Department, who will request the Examiner concerned to resolve the matter.

iii. Unresolved Cases

In case the Examiner fails to resolve the matter, the Head of Department shall forward the case to the Faculty Examinations Board.

iv. Appeal to Senate

If the Faculty fails to resolve the matter, the student shall channel his/her appeal through the Head of Department, Faculty Dean, and DRGT Director to Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic Affairs) before it is formally reported to Senate.

v. Mode of Appeal

Appeals shall be submitted in writing to DRGT not later than the 2nd week of the next regular semester.

10 SUPERVISION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS

10.1 The Research Supervisors

- i. A PhD candidate shall have a minimum of two research supervisors who shall provide joint supervision. The PhD supervisors shall be selected at the time of presenting the concept where the main supervisor shall be identified before admission. All PhD supervisors shall appear on the admission letter.
- ii. A masters student may have two or more supervisors who shall provide joint supervision:
 - a) If the research covers two or more areas of specialization, or
 - b) If the co-supervisor requires mentorship in supervision from the main supervisor.
- iii. The Department shall assign the main research supervisor for each registered Postgraduate Diploma and Masters students. A co-supervisor shall be sought where appropriate.
- iv. The Doctoral Committee shall recommend to DRGT the addition or dropping of a doctoral supervisor during the programme where necessary.
- v. In case of masters program, the Department shall recommend to DRGT the addition or dropping of a supervisor during the programme.
- vi. The Director DRGT shall appoint supervisors on receipt of a formal communication.

10.1.1 Qualifications of Supervisors

- i. The main supervisor shall primarily be selected from amongst the full-time academic staff members of MUST who are involved in research within the area of the student's interest.
- ii. The prospective main supervisor for a Postgraduate Diploma or Masters Student shall be at the rank of at least a Lecturer.
- iii. The main supervisor for a PhD student shall be a holder of a PhD; at the rank of a Senior Lecturer and with experience in postgraduate student supervision as evidenced by the curriculum vitae.
- iv. In case there are no members of academic staff at MUST with knowledge and experience in the proposed area of research, supervisors shall be sourced from outside MUST. Such supervisors shall receive Honorary Appointments.
- v. The Department shall determine appropriate research supervisor(s) for a student based on area of interest within the respective specialty/discipline. The Department shall consult the Faculty where appropriate supervisor(s) are not available.
- vi. The maximum number of students supervised by a single person shall be in line with that recommended by NCHE.

10.1.2 Supervisor Responsibilities

The supervisor is a key person in a graduate degree programme. Graduate education is affected by the nature of supervision and the quality of communication between students and their supervisors. When students work closely and effectively with supervisors, they improve the quality of their dissertations/theses and their overall educational experiences. The supervisor is required to:

- i. Provide an environment that stimulates and encourages students to learn and work independently.
- ii. Provide guidance on planning and execution of a suitable and manageable research project
- iii. Guide the student on ethical considerations and intellectual property rights.
- iv. Create an ethos of collegiality so that learning takes place within a community of scholars.
- v. Respect student's reasonable views and ideas on his/her research.
- vi. Respond in a timely and thorough manner to written work submitted by the student, with constructive suggestions for improvement and continuation.
- vii. Make arrangements to ensure continuity of supervision when he/she will be absent for extended periods.
- viii. Assist the student in gaining access to facilities or research materials.
- ix. Assist the student in being aware of current graduate programme requirements, deadlines and sources of funding.
- x. Advise the student on relevant conferences and journals where to publish.
- xi. Encourage the student to finish up when it would not be in the student's best interest to extend the study programme.
- xii. Assist the student in complying with the changes suggested during thesis defense.
- xiii. Publish the student work via joint authorship with student.

10.1.3 Graduate Student Responsibilities

When you register as a postgraduate student at MUST, you are making a commitment to devote the time and energy needed to engage in research and write a thesis or dissertation. Your supervisor has a right to expect substantial effort, initiative, respect and receptiveness to suggestions and criticisms. As a graduate student, you must accept the rules, procedures and standards in place in the programme you are registering in. Therefore, you are expected to:

- i. Make a commitment and show dedicated efforts to gain the background knowledge and skills needed to pursue your research project successfully.
- ii. Renew/maintain registration throughout the programme.
- iii. In conjunction with your supervisor(s), develop a study plan for completion of all stages of your dissertation/thesis project, adhere to the schedule and meet appropriate deadlines.
- iv. Meet with supervisor(s) at least monthly and submit progress reports every after six months.
- v. Keep supervisor(s) and relevant offices informed about your updated contact information.
- vi. Give serious consideration to the advice and criticisms received from supervisor(s) and other members of the supervisory committee.
- vii. Be thoughtful and reasonably frugal in using university resources accessed through the supervisor(s), and assist in obtaining additional resources where applicable.
- viii. Conform to graduate programme requirements, including those related to deadlines, dissertation or thesis style, conflict of interest etc.

- ix. Return borrowed materials to relevant offices when requested.
- x. Review the literature regularly and keep literature survey up-to-date.
- xi. Maintain exemplary research records or experimental procedures so that others can replicate the results where necessary.

10.2 Doctoral Committee

A Doctoral Committee (DC) will establish acceptable standards for PhD and other doctoral programmes, serves as student's advisory and performance assessment committee and monitor the student's progress throughout the study period on behalf of DRGT Board. The DC discusses the student's progress and provides additional guidance on research and overall professional development. The DC shall support timely completion of the PhD, and exposes the student to high quality research in an intellectually diverse, stimulating, active, friendly and transparent environment.

10.2.1 Membership of the Doctoral Committee

- i. A DC shall be set up at Department level principally constituted by at least two members from the major field of study (two may be supervisors or potential supervisors), Head of Department or Deputy Dean/ Faculty Research Coordinator and two other experts (minor field) deemed helpful in the pursuit of the proposed research in question.
- ii. Membership including supervisors shall be three or five individuals and shall not be less than three at any one time.
- iii. It is mandatory to have at least one member outside the department.
- iv. The DC shall be endorsed by the Dean or Deputy Dean immediately after approval of the concept and recommended for admission or following successful completion of the qualifying exams (where applicable).
- v. The committee chair shall be identified at the first meeting with an input from the doctoral student.
- vi. The committee may be responsible for more than one PhD student, and the department may have more than one DC.
- vii. The DC shall meet on a regular basis (*about 2-4 times in year 1; 1-2 times in year 2; and 2-3 times in year 3 during data analysis, manuscript writing and submission and the final reporting period*).
- viii. A minimum of 3-5 progress reports from the DC plus evidence of two publications in peer reviewed journal(s) and one manuscript are expected key outputs before the candidate is awarded the PhD.
- ix. The DC ceases when the candidate has passed viva voce (oral examination) and has submitted to DRGT the final thesis endorsed by the supervisor(s).
- x. A staff member who has accepted to be on DC shall be available for consultations by the student according to agreements they may informally make. However, a student is free to consult anybody even outside the committee.

10.2.2 Guidelines for the Doctoral Committee

10.2.2.1 Assessment of Research Concept and final Proposal

Whereas the prospective supervisor(s) would have been involved much earlier in the inception and research concept production, the DC shall assess the following:

- i. The applicant credentials and worthiness for PhD based on:
 - a) The set admission criteria and other university regulations.
 - b) Past experience, performance and past records (where available).
 - c) Recommendations and other attributes.
 - d) Evidence of ability to write clearly and concisely.
- ii. The concept and final research proposed for its academic character, feasibility/achievability within the time frame and depth. The committee shall reject or recommend the concept/proposal with revisions.
- iii. High risk projects may only be acceptable if the applicant indicates alternative strategies, should the initial plan of action prove unfeasible.
- iv. Intellectual challenges and merits of the proposed research.
- v. Quality and range of research opportunities and the training environment and facilities available at the department and university.
- vi. Make sure the safety/ ethical/legal considerations are covered and have been adhered to.
- vii. The student's competences/ skills and needs and recommend courses envisaged to be of high relevance to enhance the progress.

10.2.2.2 Identification of Supervisors

- i. The DC may identify and nominate amongst themselves with an input from the student a minimum of two supervisors for approval by DRGT Board. One supervisor shall preferably be a MUST staff and the other(s) could be anywhere in the world as long as they are accessible to the student.
- ii. Build linkages and forge collaborations to broaden the network of the student and guidance in career.

10.2.2.3 Performance monitoring

The DC shall:

- i. Review the independent reports from the student and supervisors, and send recommendations to DRGT and Faculty.
- ii. Monitor timely student progress reporting.
- iii. Identify external and internal examiners and recommend to DRGT for appointment.
- iv. Identify other research and academic opportunities both inside and outside MUST (such as conferences, workshops, training, collaborating industries, research centers, labs, etc).
- v. The DC (excluding the supervisors) shall be part of the viva voce Committee.

10.3 Strategy for Dispute Resolution

10.3.1 Student/Supervisor Dispute

- i. In case a student fails to make satisfactory progress or attain satisfactory standard of research work, the primary supervisor shall discuss the matter with the student and document the proceedings using the Supervision Report Form.
- ii. In the circumstance where the supervisors may not successfully resolve the matter, a meeting of the candidate, her/his supervisor(s), and the Supervision Team (for Masters) or Doctoral Committee shall be convened to resolve the matter.
- iii. At this stage, the issues shall be communicated in writing to Faculty Dean/ Higher Degrees Committee for intervention.
- iv. If the performance of the candidate does not improve, the Dean shall refer the matter to Higher Degrees Committee for appropriate action.
- v. If a supervisor(s) fails to provide adequate guidance to her/his student, the student shall first discuss the matter with the supervisor(s). However, if the supervisor(s) do not cooperate, then the student shall request the Doctoral Committee to intervene.
- vi. The Doctoral Committee shall immediately convene a meeting to discuss the matter. Additional members to attend the meeting include the Head of Department and Dean. The student and supervisor(s) may be invited to attend the meeting.
- vii. If the Supervision Team/ Doctoral Committee fails to resolve the matter, the Faculty Dean shall forward the matter to DRGT Board.

10.3.2 Supervisor/Supervisor Dispute

In cases where supervisors are in conflict, a meeting shall be constituted by the Doctoral Committee/Supervision Team to look into the conflict. The meeting shall be constituted by the Committee members, the head of department and Faculty Dean. The student and supervisor(s) may be invited to the meeting.

If a solution is not found then a report shall be made to DRGT who may seek guidance from the Vice Chancellor in matters of high complexity.

11 RESEARCH PROPOSAL DEVELOPMENT AND APPROVAL GUIDELINES

- i. The research proposal process is designed to help students navigate the process of research and, where possible, to prevent unfruitful work.
- ii. The proposal tasks students to carefully state the goals of their research and to conduct a review of the literature in which the research is grounded.
- iii. These guidelines were designed to prevent a research project that either cannot be completed or will not be acceptable if it is completed.

11.1 Components of a Research Proposal

- i. A research proposal should give the necessary information for a reader who is knowledgeable of the field to understand:
 - a) what the student is proposing to accomplish,
 - b) how the proposed research builds on and adds to the current state of knowledge, and
 - c) What tools, resources, and timeframe will be necessary to accomplish the research?
- ii. Generally, proposals are structured as title page, table of contents, preliminary pages including the summary, **Chapter 1: Introduction** (background, research problem, conceptual framework, aims/objectives and research questions, hypothesis, justification/significance); **Chapter 2: Literature Review** (and Theory depending on discipline); and **Chapter 3: Materials and Methods** (or simply “Methodology”). Proposals end with the Methodology Chapter that is generally written in future tense. The detailed Methodology shall be structured by specific objectives; that is describing in detail how each specific objective will be achieved. The summarized budget and time frame may be placed in Chapter 3. The detailed budget and budget justification shall be placed in appendices. Citation is done appropriately within the three chapters of the proposal, but the list of references is placed at the end of Methodology before appendices. Additional documents put in appendices may include: data collection tools (questionnaire, checklist, focus group discussion guide, etc), Standard Operating Procedures, Informed Consent Form, maps, etc.
- iii. Faculties may allow flexibility in formatting in order to best achieve the study goals. For example, some projects may require extensive discussions of theory before the research problem can be understood.

iv. Citation

There is variation in the recommended citation methods by Faculties due to preference in the journals advancing specific disciplines. The Faculty of Medicine recommends Harvard style; Faculty of Computing and Informatics recommends: i) Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) that is based on Chicago referencing style; and ii) The Association for Computing Machinery (ACM). The Faculty of Interdisciplinary Studies recommends: i) Harvard and ii) American Psychological Association (APA) preferably 6th Edition. Some departments in Faculty of Science recommend APA while others recommend different citation methods including IEEE, etc. It is the responsibility of the supervisor to guide the student regarding the appropriate method of citation. The citation method used in the proposal and ultimately the thesis/dissertation shall be uniform.

- v. Additional details on organizing and formatting the research proposal are contained in the document, 'Proposal, Thesis and Dissertation Guidelines.'

11.2 Proposal Approval Procedure

- i. All postgraduate proposals shall initially be approved by the supervisor(s). The duly signed copy of the proposal shall be forwarded to the line department for approval within the first month of the third semester for the case of Masters Degree Programmes.
- ii. In the case of Doctoral Degree Programmes, the proposal shall be presented and submitted for approval during the period of Provisional Admission.
- iii. The approval at the Department shall be granted after the candidate has presented the proposal to a Departmental or Faculty forum. In the case of PhD students, the forum shall include at least two members of the Doctoral Committee, the supervisor(s) and senior researchers knowledgeable in the area of study.
- iv. A proposal approval form (Appendix B) shall be signed and forwarded to DRGT by the Head of Department and copy to Dean.
- v. At the Faculty level, the proposal shall be reviewed by a competent Committee (i.e. Faculty Research Committee, Higher Degrees Research and Innovation Committee etc). The Committee may co-opt an external expert to review the proposal where necessary.
- vi. The Committee at the Faculty shall communicate to the candidate (Principal Applicant) the outcome of the review, copy to Dean, Head of Department and Faculty Higher Degrees Committee and DRGT. This communication should clearly indicate the: student names, registration number and study title.
- vii. All research proposals involving human and animal subjects shall require ethical approval from MUST Research Ethics Committee (MUST REC). In this case, the student shall not commence data collection until ethical approval is granted. Twelve (12) copies of the documents listed below must be submitted when seeking ethical approval. Students may consult MUST REC Secretariat before submission. Further details and soft copies of the forms (ie Ethical Application Form, Standardized Informed Consent Form, etc) are available at: <http://www.must.ac.ug/research-innovation/research-ethics-committee>

- a) Letter by student indicating study title requesting MUST REC approval.
 - b) Fully developed proposal with updated timeframe and justified budget, appropriate annexes including questionnaires and other data collection tools, etc.
 - c) Filled ethical application form.
 - d) Filled ethical consent form (where applicable).
 - e) Copy of letter from Faculty Research Committee indicating that adjustments were made as per committee advise and supporting submission to MUST REC.
 - f) Letter from supervisor addressed to Chair MUST REC indicating that the proposal was passed by the department and submitting a revised version as advised by the Faculty Research Committee.
 - g) Storage of biological materials consent form (for studies involving specimens such as blood, semen, hair, urine, finger nails, stool, etc).
 - h) Material transfer and data sharing agreement (for studies intending to take materials abroad).
- viii. The approval by MUST REC is valid for 12 months. Annual continuing review shall be required for research studies extending beyond 12 months from the date of initial approval even if data collection has not started. Annual progress report shall be submitted at the time of seeking ethical renewal.
- ix. The student shall be advised by MUST REC if the proposal requires further review and approval from Uganda National Council for Science and Technology (UNCST) before commencing data collection.
- x. Study protocol amendments in relation to data and specimen (sample) collection, etc after initial MUST REC approval must be sought from MUST REC.
- xi. The research title of a doctoral candidate shall not be changed without approval of the Doctoral Committee. The research title of masters and postgraduate diploma candidates shall not be changed without the approval of the primary supervisor. It is the responsibility of the student to notify DRGT about the change of title with endorsement of the primary supervisor in the case of masters; and primary supervisor and Chair of Doctoral Committee in the case of PhD.
- xii. The Department and supervision team or Doctoral Committee shall schedule regular checkpoints for each student beyond the initial approval of the proposal. These checkpoints including presentations shall ensure that the student receives the necessary guidance to move forward productively on the project.

12 THESIS AND DISSERTATION FORMAT

- i. Postgraduate students at MUST shall follow the traditional thesis/dissertation format (also known as Public format).
- ii. The thesis/dissertation shall be written in English.
- iii. Additional details on organizing and formatting the thesis/dissertation are contained in the separate document, ‘Proposal, Thesis, and Dissertation Guidelines.’

12.1 The Public Format

The public format normally consists of the title page, table of contents, preliminary pages, abstract and the main text structured in six basic chapters. **Chapter 1:** Introduction (background, statement of the problem, conceptual framework, aims/objectives and research questions, hypothesis, justification also referred to as significance); **Chapter 2:** Literature Review (and Theory depending on discipline); **Chapter 3:** Materials and Methods (or simply “Methodology”). In a thesis/dissertation, the Methodology Chapter is written in past tense. The detailed Methodology is structured by specific objectives. **Chapter 4:** Results, **Chapter 5:** Discussion and **Chapter 6:** Conclusion and Recommendations. After introductory paragraphs and general characteristics, Chapters 4 and 5 are structured in response to specific objectives and written in past tense. Citation is done appropriately throughout the document with the list of references placed after Chapter 6, but before appendices. There is no citation in the abstract. More chapters may be added depending on the nature of objectives set to be achieved. The reference section and any appendices shall follow the last chapter. Documents put in appendices may include: Ethical approval letter, letters of permission from relevant authorities to collect data, stamped Informed Consent Form, maps, questionnaire and other data collection tools, Standard Operating Procedures, published papers, accepted manuscripts, etc.

13 EXAMINATION OF THESIS/DISSERTATION

When the candidate has completed his/her thesis, he/she signs it together with the supervisor. The thesis/dissertation is submitted to DRGT for examination through the Head of Department and Faculty.

13.1 Submission Process

- i. A doctoral candidate shall have a minimum of two articles published or accepted for publication in peer reviewed journal(s) at the time of submission of the thesis for examination.
- ii. A masters’ candidate shall have at least one paper published or accepted for publication in a peer reviewed journal at submission of dissertation for examination.
- iii. The publications shall be current and within the framework of the thesis/dissertation, with the candidate as the principal author. All publications/ accepted papers shall be appended in the thesis/dissertation at the time of submission for examination as well as final binding. These appendices shall be appropriately indicated with a number in the body of the thesis/dissertation.

- iv. Before submission of the thesis/dissertation, candidates shall be required to express the “intention to submit” their work.
- v. The intention to submit a Doctoral or Master’s thesis shall be made at least three months before actual submission.
- vi. The intention to submit thesis/dissertation shall be addressed to the Director DRGT, clearly stating the title and must be endorsed by the supervisor and Head of Department.
- vii. The last date of defense to enable a candidate to be listed for the subsequent graduation ceremony shall be two months before graduation.
- viii. The supervisor shall check the thesis/dissertation for plagiarism using software for example “*Turnitin*” before forwarding it for examination. The similarity index shall be indicated in the submission cover letter.
- ix. Five copies of spiral-bound theses/dissertations shall be endorsed by the supervisor(s) and forwarded to Director DRGT through the Head of Department and Faculty Dean.
- x. DRGT shall dispatch the thesis/dissertation to one External and two internal examiners.

13.2 Appointment of Examiners for Thesis/Dissertation

- i. External and Internal Examiners shall be recommended by the line department through the Faculty Dean to DRGT for appointment.
- ii. The recommendation of new External Examiners shall be accompanied by Curriculum Vitae.
- iii. DRGT shall seek permission from the Vice Chancellor to appoint new External Examiners.
- iv. Examiners shall be appointed from the relevant academic discipline or profession. They shall be persons of seniority in their fields with relevant experience and sufficient knowledge of the subject area to be in position to competently assess the candidate.
- v. External Examiners shall not have been employed by MUST during the last three, four, or five years for a three, four, or five year programmes respectively.
- vi. External Examiners shall be appointed after signing the conflict of interest form. The standard format of the conflict of interest form is provided in Appendix C.
- vii. Information concerning External Examiners shall be kept confidential to candidates.
- viii. DRGT shall be the only authorized entity to directly communicate with External Examiners in regard to the examination processes.
- ix. There shall be no communication between External Examiner and the Department, Faculty or candidate concerning the examination process without the knowledge of DRGT.

- x. If it is established that the candidate, Department, or Faculty is in communication with the External Examiner in regard to the examination process, the process shall be terminated and another External Examiner shall be appointed to re-start the process.
- xi. Examiners shall be given a period of three months to examine a Doctoral thesis and a period of one month for examining a Master's dissertation.

13.3 Examination of Thesis/Dissertation by External and Internal Examiners

- i. The examination process including the public defense shall not take more than six months from the date the candidate submits his/her thesis/dissertation.
- ii. Both Masters and Doctoral dissertations/theses shall be assessed by at least three examiners. At least one must be external examiner. The supervisor cannot be an examiner.
- iii. If after appointment the examiner is unable to examine the thesis/dissertation, he/she shall formerly communicate to DRGT. DRGT shall communicate to the Faculty/Institute/Department to identify alternative examiner for appointment.
- iv. If the candidate is a member of staff, examiners shall be external to candidates' Faculty.
- v. All examiners shall compile and submit independent reports on their assessment of the thesis/dissertation to DRGT.
- vi. All examiners shall assess the thesis/dissertation out of 100 marks. An average shall be obtained and weighted at 60% of the final grade; the remaining 40% is from viva voce.
- vii. If the examiners detect significant intentional plagiarism, the examination process shall be terminated and the thesis/dissertation shall be returned to DRGT.
- viii. The suspected plagiarized material shall be reported in writing to DRGT giving reference to the original plagiarized material.
- ix. The plagiarism case shall be investigated by the relevant committees and DRGT Board.
- x. If the candidate is found guilty of the offense of significant intentional plagiarism, he/she shall be recommended to Senate for discontinuation.
- xi. If less significant plagiarism is present, in the form of improper referencing or improper use of quotations, these shall be categorized as minor corrections. The student shall be asked to correct the references using referencing software.
- xii. If examiners report minor corrections, a viva voce shall be arranged for the candidate. Minor corrections involve typographical errors, issues on writing styles or any other issues as examiners may specify.
- xiii. If examiners recommend major revisions, a viva voce shall not be organized for the candidate. The candidate shall be advised to revise and re-submit the thesis/dissertation for re-examination by the external and internal examiners.

- xiv. Major revisions are needed when the theory and methodology are appropriate but more data needs to be collected and/or if it is necessary to redo data analysis or when the discussions and conclusions are faulted or when the thesis is generally of poor quality and needs to be rewritten. The examiner may state any other issues that would require the thesis to undergo major revision.
- xv. If there is a disagreement, with at least one examiner recommending the thesis/dissertation with minor corrections while another does not recommend the thesis/dissertation for the award, the Doctoral committee shall handle such a matter under the chairmanship of the Dean and make recommendations to DRGT.
- xvi. DRGT shall submit copies of examination reports to the Faculty before the viva voce.
- xvii. The viva voce panel shall have access to thesis/dissertation examination reports.
- xviii. A thesis shall be rejected if it lacks originality, if it has serious plagiarism issues, if there are issues with the theory, if the methodology is inappropriate or any other issues as examiners may specify
- xix. Cross-examination of each other's candidate is prohibited.

13.4 Thesis/Dissertation Assessment Guidelines for Examiners

Theses/Dissertations shall be evaluated and awarded marks in accordance to provisions outlined below. These guidelines are designed to be flexible, since different theses/dissertations may follow slightly different formats.

- | | |
|----------|---|
| 20 Marks | The thesis/dissertation includes the necessary background material to understand the student's contribution to the field. This information will normally be found in the Introduction, Theory, and Literature Review, although different theses and dissertations may need to divide the information differently between chapters in order to present the information most clearly to the reader. |
| 10 Marks | The research contribution is clearly and completely described, giving sufficient detail that the reader can verify that the arguments and methods are correct. It should be possible for a future researcher to continue in the same field based on the level of detail provided. This description will normally be found in the Materials and Methods Chapter. |
| 60 Marks | The thesis/dissertation presents an original contribution to the field of knowledge and represents appropriate intellectual output. This consideration constitutes the majority of marks awarded because it is the core of the post-graduate programme: if there is no original contribution of appropriate significance, then the degree shall not be awarded. The reader will normally determine the extent of the original contribution through the Results, Analysis, and Discussion sections of the thesis/dissertation. |
| 5 Marks | The thesis/dissertation should clearly motivate its Analysis, Conclusions, and Recommendations. |
| 5 Marks | The Reference section must be sufficiently complete that the reader can easily locate the important resources. |

The total of these marks shall determine the grade

Grade	Range of Marks (%)	Grade Point
A	80 – 100	5
B+	75 – 79.9	4.5
B	70 – 74.9	4
C+	65 – 69.9	3.5
C	60 – 64.9	3
F	0 – 59.9	F

A candidate who obtains a mark below the pass mark (60%) shall re-submit and get re-examined or shall have failed out rightly.

Additionally, examiners shall provide overall assessment, basing on the following:

- i. The examination is passed:
 - a) Outright.
 - b) Conditionally subject to addressing minor concerns raised. Minor corrections involve typographical errors, issues on writing styles or any other issues as examiners may specify.
 - c) Conditionally subject to addressing the major concerns raised. Major revisions are needed when the theory and methodology are appropriate but more data needs to be collected and/or if it is necessary to redo data analysis or when the discussions and conclusions are faulted or when the thesis is generally of poor quality and needs to be rewritten. The examiner may state any other issues that would require the thesis to undergo major revision.
- ii. The thesis/dissertation is inadequate for an award. The thesis should be rejected if it lacks originality, it has serious plagiarism issues, if the existing underpinning theory, or methodology is inappropriate or other issues as examiners may specify.

13.5 The public defense or Viva Voce Examination

- i. Viva voce examinations shall be public and compulsory for all postgraduate students.
- ii. The candidate shall be formally invited for the public defense by the Faculty Dean on the recommendation of DRGT at least two weeks in advance of the date of defense.
- iii. In case a candidate is not ready to defend the work orally, he/she shall formally apply for postponement of viva voce.
- iv. The viva voce examination shall be chaired by the Faculty Dean or his/her delegate.
- v. The venue, panelists, and required facilities for presentation during the oral defense shall be organized by the Faculty.
- vi. Chaired by the Dean, the examination panel shall consist of at least five persons including a Discussant/Opponent, External Examiner, Internal Examiners and DRGT. In the case of a PhD candidate, members of the Doctoral Committee (other than supervisors) may be part of the panel.
- vii. The supervisor(s) of the candidate shall not be appointed on the examination panel.

- viii. The oral defense shall consist of PowerPoint presentation by the candidate and interaction through questions and answers with panelists and audience.
- ix. After the candidate has presented, the opponent shall introduce the key issues in the thesis to the audience and engage him/her.
- x. A Doctoral student shall make a PowerPoint presentation lasting not more than 45 minutes. This shall be followed by a discussion of the presentation by: the examination panel and audience. The Viva Voce Panel will then discuss and make a verdict. The two discussion processes shall last not more than a total of 120 minutes. A master's candidate shall make a presentation lasting not more than 20 minutes followed by 30 minutes discussion with Examination Panel. A postgraduate diploma candidate shall make a presentation not lasting more than 15 minutes followed by 30 minutes discussion with examination panel.
- xi. The Examination Chair, in consultation with the Discussant/Opponent, shall determine the order of questions from the panelists and the audience.
- xii. The opinions from the audience shall only be used to enrich quality of the thesis/dissertation discussion but shall not be used to determine the decision of the examination panel.

13.6 Verdict of the Viva Voce Panel

- i. The viva voce examination panel shall make an independent decision on the quality of the work based on the content of the dissertation or thesis, presentation by the candidate, and the manner in which the candidate responds to questions and comments raised during the viva voce examination.
- ii. If the student is determined to have passed the viva voce examination, the mark on the viva voce shall be weighted at 40% to derive the final mark for the thesis/dissertation.
- iii. The viva voce panel may pass the defense conditionally, requiring that minor corrections are made to the thesis/dissertation to the satisfaction of the supervisor(s).
- iv. The Chair of the Viva Voce panel shall announce the verdict to the public/audience same day shortly after the private meeting.

14 AWARD OF THE DEGREE

- i. The candidate shall be considered for the award of the degree by Senate if:
 - a) All minor corrections are made to the satisfaction of the supervisor(s). All major corrections are made to the satisfaction of one person on the viva voce examination panel.
 - b) The designated person shall write to the Director DRGT confirming that the candidate has made the corrections to his or her satisfaction.

- c) Five final hardcover bound copies signed by the candidate and supervisor(s) are submitted to DRGT through the line Department and Faculty Dean.
- d) PhD candidates must submit soft copies to drgt@must.ac.ug of:
 - i) Abstract for publication at MUST website.
 - ii) Citation (saved in MS Word 97-2003 version). The citation is a quarter page written in one paragraph, single line spacing and includes the candidate names, research title, main objective, methods, main findings, recommendations, funders and supervisors.
 - iii) Full Thesis for final testing of plagiarism.
- e) Masters and Postgraduate Diploma candidates must submit soft copies to drgt@must.ac.ug of:
 - i) Abstract for publication at MUST website,
 - ii) Full dissertation for final testing of plagiarism.
- ii. The postgraduate dissertations/thesis shall be bound using the following colors:
 - a) The cover of postgraduate Diploma dissertation shall be navy blue in color.
 - b) The cover for Masters Dissertation shall be black in color.
 - c) The cover of Doctoral theses shall be red in color.
- iii. The author's name shall be printed on the thesis/dissertation along the spine starting with the surname, followed by the initials and year of submission.

15 GRADUATION

- i. When a student has successfully completed her/his studies at postgraduate level, she/he reserves the right to graduate either in person or in absentia.
- ii. The graduation guidelines shall be obtained from the Office of Academic Registrar.
- iii. Before graduation, the candidate may request for a "Letter of Award" following approval of results by Senate.
- iv. The request for "Letter of Award" shall be addressed to Academic Registrar through the Head of Department, Dean and Director DRGT.

Appendix A: Progress Report Form

MBARARA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY



PROGRESS REPORT FORM

Five copies of this form must be completed after every six months. Completed and duly signed copies should be distributed as follows:

- 1. DRGT (To report to DRGT Board)**
- 2. Faculty Dean in which the course is offered**
- 3. Head of Department**
- 4. Supervisor**
- 5. Candidate**

PART I (To be completed by the candidate)

1. Full Names.....
2. Registration #:..... Student #:.....
3. Faculty.....
4. Department.....
5. Year of Study..... Academic year.....
6. Course registered for.....
7. Name of your Supervisor (for those on research).....
8. How frequently do you meet with your Supervisor.....
9. Provide a brief account of the progress in your studies during the last six months.
.....
.....
.....
10. What problems have you faced during the last six months of your study?
.....
.....
11. Give a personal evaluation of your progress.
.....
.....
12. Provide any other comments.
.....
.....
13. Signature..... Date.....

PART II (To be completed by the Supervisor)

1. Names
2. Give a summary of the candidate's progress during the last six months in terms of knowledge, skills and attitude.

.....
.....
.....
.....

3. What problems has your candidate experienced during the last six months that have hindered his/her progress?

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.....
.....

4. What problems have you experienced with the candidate during the last six months that have hindered his/her progress?

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.....

5. What is your own evaluation of the candidate's progress?

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.....
.....

Signature.....Date.....

PART III (Comments by Head of Department)

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.....
.....

Signature.....Date.....

Appendix B: Proposal Approval Form

MBARARA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY



PROPOSAL APPROVAL FORM

To: The Director of Research and Graduate Training

Name.....

Registration #:..... Student #:.....

Programme.....

.....

Department.....

Faculty/Institute.....

Academic Year.....

Semester.....

This is to certify that the proposal titled:

.....
.....
.....
.....

was approved for a study leading to the award of

.....
.....

of Mbarara University of Science and Technology

Signature/Stamp.....Date.....

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

cc: Faculty Dean

Appendix C: Declaration of Conflict of Interest by External Examiners

MBARARA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY



DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Student's information

Name.....Reg. No.....
Programme.....
Department.....Faculty/Institute.....
Academic year.....

Supervisor's information

Name.....
Title.....
Department.....
Faculty/Institute.....

To be filled by Prospective External Examiners

Choose the appropriate alternative. If any of the questions carry a “YES” answer, then the prospective External Examiner has conflict of interest in examining the thesis/dissertation.

1. During the last three/four/five years, have you conducted research or coauthored publications with the student or her/his supervisor(s)?.....(YES/NO)
2. Are you running a joint business venture with the student(s) or her/his supervisor(s)?.....(YES/NO)
3. Do you bear any relationship (spouse, biological relationship, in-law) with the student(s) or her/his supervisor(s)?.....(YES/NO)
4. Have you ever negotiated any future engagements with the student(s) in terms of employment or supervision?.....(YES/NO)
5. Have you been an employee of MUST during the last three/four/five years?.....(YES/NO)
6. Were you supervised by the student's supervisor within the last six years?.....(YES/NO)
7. Are you involved in any relationship with the student, supervisor, department, faculty, or even MUST administration in a manner as to elicit conflict of interest in the examination process?.....(YES/NO)

I declare that I have no conflict of interest in examining this thesis/dissertation entitled:

.....
.....

Name.....Qualification.....

Signature.....Date.....