

PhD Statute

General requirements

1. Candidates for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) are required to undertake an original and coherent research project and to present the outcome of that research project for examination as a thesis.
2. The research project, which may include scholarly creative practice, must involve enquiry that is experimental and/or critical in nature and be driven by an intellectual hypothesis, position, problem or question(s) capable of being rigorously explored and of making an original and significant contribution to knowledge and/or understanding in the relevant field(s) of study.
3. The research project must be conducted under supervision and over the period of enrolment in the PhD programme, and must be conducted in accordance with the [Research Code of Conduct Policy](#).
4. The thesis requirement at Regulation 1 must be satisfied by a cohesive written document, which shall not normally exceed 100,000 words. Scholarly creative work (written or otherwise) that forms an integrated whole with the written document may be submitted for examination as part of the thesis requirement.
5. The thesis must be undertaken and completed in accordance with the [doctoral thesis policy and procedures](#) and, where scholarly creative work is (to be) presented for examination as part of the thesis requirement, with the [policy and procedures for including scholarly creative work in a PhD](#).
6. In order for the PhD degree to be awarded, Regulation 47 must be satisfied, and the Board of Graduate Studies (or delegate[s]) must be satisfied that, subject to Regulation 43, the candidate has performed at doctoral level in an oral examination held in accordance with this Statute and on the subject of the thesis and the field(s) to which the subject belongs, and satisfied, by the examination process prescribed by this Statute, that the thesis i) makes an original and significant contribution to knowledge or understanding in its field(s), and ii) meets internationally recognised standards for such work, and iii) demonstrates knowledge of the literature relevant to the subject and the field(s) to which the subject belongs, and demonstrates the ability to exercise critical and analytical judgement of that literature, and iv) is satisfactory in its methodology, in the quality and coherence of its expression, and in its scholarly presentation and format.

Duration

7. The thesis must be submitted within a maximum of 48 months of full-time equivalent enrolment from the initial date of enrolment in the PhD programme, unless a later submission date is permitted by the Board of Graduate Studies (or delegate) in accordance with the [policy and procedures for extension of doctoral enrolment](#). For the avoidance of doubt, the provisions pertaining to the submission of the "thesis" in this regulation and in the remainder of this statute apply to all work (to be) presented for examination in fulfilment of the thesis requirement at Regulation 1.
8. The thesis must not be submitted in less than 36 months of full-time equivalent enrolment from the initial date of enrolment in the PhD programme, unless permission is granted by the Board of Graduate Studies (or delegate).
9. Permission for submission of the thesis must not be granted where a candidate has been enrolled for less than 24 months full-time equivalent from the initial date of enrolment in the PhD programme.
10. Part-time enrolment may be permitted, subject to the [policy and procedures for full-time and part-time PhD enrolment](#).
11. A candidate may be permitted to suspend their enrolment subject to the [policy and procedures for suspension of doctoral enrolment](#).
12. Unless permitted under the [masters thesis transfer policy and procedures](#), the initial date of enrolment in the PhD programme may not be backdated except in exceptional circumstances as approved by the Board of Graduate Studies (or delegate) and up to a maximum of six months.

Admission

13. To be admitted to the PhD programme, applicants must satisfy the University's Admission regulations and are required to have:

a in their most recent attempt at a relevant qualification:

(i) completed the requirements for a Bachelors Honours or Masters degree or postgraduate diploma in a relevant subject area with at least a B+ average at the University of Auckland, or, where relevant to the intended subject of the PhD, the Degree of Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery at the University of Auckland; in all cases relevance is determined by the Board of Graduate Studies (or delegate)

or

(ii) satisfied the requirements of the [masters thesis transfer policy and procedures](#)

or

(iii) completed the requirements for a qualification approved by the Board of Graduate Studies (or delegate) as relevant, with regard to subject area, and as equivalent to a Bachelors Honours or Masters degree with at least a B+ average at the University of Auckland

and

b satisfied the requirements of the [policy and procedures for PhD candidate research capacity](#)

and

c satisfied the University of Auckland postgraduate English language requirements and any further requirements for evidence of English language proficiency set by the Board of Graduate Studies (or delegate)

and

d where creative work is to be presented for examination as part of the thesis requirement, have satisfied the eligibility and research project approval requirements of the [policy and procedures for including scholarly creative work in a PhD](#)

and

e have a research project approved by the Board of Graduate Studies (or delegate) as consistent with the requirements of Regulation 2 and capable of satisfying the requirements for the award of the PhD degree

and

f have the approval of the Head(s) of the relevant academic unit(s) or their nominee(s) for the purposes of doctoral matters ("the Academic Head(s)") with regard to the availability of appropriate supervision and the availability of the research resources deemed necessary by the Academic Head(s).

14. In exceptional circumstances, the Board of Graduate Studies (or delegate) may, subject to the [policy and procedures for exceptional circumstance entry to the PhD](#), admit to the PhD programme an applicant whose qualifications do not meet the requirements of Regulation 13a.

15. An applicant may be considered for transfer from an existing doctoral enrolment subject to the [policy and procedures for doctoral transfer](#).

16. An applicant may be considered for off-campus enrolment subject to the [policy and procedures for off-campus research](#).

17. The final decision on admission to the PhD programme shall be made by the Board of Graduate Studies (or delegate).

18. Admission to the PhD programme may be rescinded prior to enrolment in the programme where information that was not available to the Board of Graduate Studies (or delegate) at the time the admission decision was made, and which would have resulted in a different decision being made, becomes available,

or where, due to circumstances unforeseeable at the time of the decision, supervision and/or necessary resources will no longer be available for the enrolment.

19. Admission to the PhD programme is valid for up to six months (or a maximum of 12 months in exceptional circumstances as approved by the Board of Graduate Studies (or delegate)) from the date of notification of admission to the programme. Where enrolment in the programme does not occur within that time, re-application for admission to the programme is required.

20. Concurrent enrolment in another programme at the University of Auckland or at another institution is not permitted except in exceptional circumstances approved by the Board of Graduate Studies (or delegate).

21. Persons who are permitted by the Board of Graduate Studies (or delegate) to enrol in a joint or dual doctoral degree must satisfy all the requirements of this Statute in order to have the PhD degree awarded, unless an individual requirement is varied under Regulation 53.

Supervision

22. The Academic Head(s) is (are) responsible for the provision of supervision for the duration of the candidate's enrolment.

23. The Board of Graduate Studies (or delegate) will appoint at least two supervisors for each candidate in accordance with the [doctoral supervision policy and procedures](#).

24. Changes in supervision during candidature are subject to the [doctoral supervision policy and procedures](#) and the approval of the Board of Graduate Studies (or delegate), with whom the final decision as to the appointment of supervisors rests.

Enrolment and Candidature

25. Except for any period(s) of suspension approved under Regulation 11, candidates are required to be enrolled continuously from the initial date of enrolment in the PhD programme until the date of thesis submission under Regulations 7-9.

26. Candidature for the PhD degree commences upon enrolment in the PhD programme and continues, regardless of any period(s) of suspension approved under Regulation 11, until completion of the requirements for the degree, unless candidature expires under Regulation 28 or is terminated under Regulation 49.

27. Candidature is provisional until confirmed, and is subject to the [confirmation of candidature policy and procedures](#), the [continuation of confirmed candidature policy and procedures](#), and the [candidature intervention policy and procedures](#).

28. Candidature for the PhD degree expires when a candidate fails to submit their thesis for examination by the date required under Regulation 7 or by the date specified by the Board of Graduate Studies (or delegate) pursuant to Regulation 45.

29. Where candidature has expired under Regulation 28, it may be reinstated only as the outcome of a successful application to the Board of Graduate Studies (or delegate) for a (retrospective) extension of enrolment, or by successful appeal under Regulation 54 of a decision by the Board of Graduate Studies (or delegate) to decline an extension of enrolment (retrospective or otherwise).

30. Enrolment in the PhD programme is not possible where candidature remains expired under Regulation 28.

31. Termination of candidature under Regulation 49 is also termination of enrolment in the PhD programme for enrolled candidates.

32. Candidates who are required, pursuant to Regulation 45, to revise and resubmit their thesis for examination by the date specified by the Board of Graduate Studies (or delegate) are required to be enrolled for the duration of the period of revision of the thesis. The maximum duration of enrolment for revision and resubmission of a thesis pursuant to Regulation 45 is 12 months full-time equivalent.

33. Candidates who wish to be absent from the University in pursuit of their research for more than one month during enrolment are subject to the [doctoral policy and procedures for off-campus research](#).

34. Candidates are subject to the [Research Code of Conduct Policy](#) and all University statutes, regulations, rules and policies relating to student conduct and obligations (academic or otherwise) for the duration of candidature.

35. Candidates may change the title of their thesis at any point prior to submission of the thesis for examination, subject to the approval of the Board of Graduate Studies (or delegate).

Fees

36. All fees required by and/or pursuant to the [Fees Statute](#) and the [PhD domestic tuition fees policy and procedures](#) must be paid for the duration of enrolment in the PhD programme.

37. Tuition fees are not payable for any period during which enrolment has been suspended under Regulation 11.

38. A candidate who submits a thesis or withdraws from the PhD programme, or who has their enrolment terminated, will receive a refund of one-twelfth of the tuition fee paid for each complete month of the period between the date of submission of the thesis or withdrawal from the programme or termination of enrolment and the end of the academic year for which fees have been paid, provided the candidate has been enrolled for at least 36 months.

39. Candidates will not be able to graduate until all outstanding monies owing to the University have been paid.

Submission

40. The thesis must be submitted in accordance with the [thesis submission procedures – pre examination](#).

Examination

41. For each candidate, the Board of Graduate Studies (or delegate) will appoint two examiners, at least one of whom must be based outside New Zealand, in accordance with the [appointment of doctoral examiners policy and procedures](#).

42. The examination for the PhD degree must be conducted in accordance with the [doctoral examination procedures](#) and/or, where the Board of Graduate Studies (or delegate) regards it as warranted, with the [doctoral examination extraordinary circumstances and posthumous award procedures](#). Where scholarly creative work is submitted as part of the thesis requirement, the examination is also subject to the [policy and procedures for including scholarly creative work in a PhD](#)

43. Except where a candidate is exempted pursuant to the [doctoral examination extraordinary circumstances and posthumous award procedures](#), the PhD degree cannot be awarded where an oral examination has not taken place.

44. Where a candidate advances to oral examination, the oral examination is to proceed in accordance with the [doctoral examination procedures](#) and the [doctoral oral examination procedures](#).

45. The Board of Graduate Studies (or delegate) will consider all examination reports and recommendations made pursuant to the [doctoral examination procedures](#) and determine the outcome of the examination.

Final Decision

46. The final decision as to the award of the PhD degree will be made by the Board of Graduate Studies (or delegate[s]), who may also be the decision-maker at Regulation 45.

47. The final examined and approved thesis must be submitted in accordance with the [thesis submission procedures – post examination](#) in order for the requirements of the PhD degree to be met.

Withdrawal from Programme

48. A candidate may withdraw from the PhD programme at any time by notifying the University in writing.

Termination of Candidature

49. The Board of Graduate Studies (or delegate) may terminate the candidature of any enrolled or non-enrolled candidate on any one or more of the following grounds:

- (i) failure to meet the requirements for confirmation of candidature pursuant to Regulation 27
- (ii) failure to meet the requirements for continuation of confirmed candidature pursuant to Regulation 27
- (iii) failure to satisfy conditions imposed on candidature pursuant to Regulation 27
- (iv) failure to comply with candidature reporting requirements pursuant to Regulation 27
- (v) failure to complete or satisfactorily complete revisions to an examined thesis by the date required by the Board of Graduate Studies (or delegate)
- (vi) failure to comply with the [thesis submission procedures – post examination](#)
- (vii) failure to make payment of any tuition fees related to enrolment in the PhD by the due date

50. Before the Board of Graduate Studies (or delegate) makes a decision as to termination of candidature pursuant to Regulation 49, the candidate will be given notice of termination proceedings and allowed fourteen calendar days to make a submission for the Board of Graduate Studies (or delegate) to take into account in making that decision.

51. Cancellation or prohibition of enrolment and/or candidature pursuant to any disciplinary statute of the University takes precedence over the provisions of this Statute.

52. Where a candidate withdraws from the PhD programme, or has their candidature terminated, enrolment in a new PhD or other doctoral programme in the same subject at a later date will not normally be permitted.

Variations

53. In exceptional circumstances, the Board of Graduate Studies (or delegate) may approve a variation to the policies, procedures and regulations for PhD candidature, except where variation of a national or government directive or requirement is involved.

Appeals

54. Candidates may appeal decisions made by the Board of Graduate Studies (or delegate) pertaining to extension and suspension of enrolment and termination of candidature, subject to the [procedures for doctoral appeals – candidature](#).

55. Appeals as to extension and suspension of enrolment and termination of candidature will be determined in accordance with the [procedures for doctoral appeals – candidature](#)..

56. Candidates may appeal the outcome of a PhD examination only on the grounds that the result was materially impacted by a procedural flaw in the examination process, and subject to the [procedures for doctoral appeals – examination](#).

57. Appeals as to examination will be determined in accordance with the [procedures for doctoral appeals – examination](#).

Dispute Resolution

58. Disputes are to be resolved according to the [Resolution of Student Academic Complaints and Disputes Statute](#).

Further Provisions

59. The doctoral policies and procedures cited in this Statute may be reviewed and amended from time-to-time.

60. PhD candidates are subject to any additional doctoral policies and procedures devised in support of this Statute, and amended from time to time.

61. This Statute may itself be reviewed and amended from time-to-time.

62. This Statute came into force on 1 October 2020.

63. For candidates initially registered under a previous statute, the Board of Graduate Studies (or delegate) may agree to vary the application of the provisions of this Statute to ensure consistency with the provisions of the statute under which the candidate was enrolled, where it is satisfied that the candidate would otherwise be at a disadvantage.