



NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY  
YUNIBESITI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA  
NOORDWES-UNIVERSITEIT  
INSTITUTIONAL OFFICE

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## POLICY ON JOINT AND DOUBLE DEGREES AT MASTER'S AND DOCTORAL LEVEL WITH FOREIGN UNIVERSITIES

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# POLICY ON JOINT AND DOUBLE DEGREES AT MASTER'S AND DOCTORAL LEVEL WITH FOREIGN UNIVERSITIES

## 1 Preamble

As a pre-eminent University in Africa, driven by the pursuit of knowledge and innovation, with a unique institutional culture based upon the values the University espouses, the North-West University ("NWU" or "University") has adopted this Policy on Joint and Double degrees at Master's and Doctoral level with foreign universities on 31 July 2015.

## 2 Scope of application

This policy applies to all collaborative degrees at the Master's and Doctoral level where a student wishes to enrol for a joint or double degree in programmes approved by participating foreign Institutions, it being understood that:

- the relevant legal requirements of the participating foreign Institution and the relevant legal requirement of the Statutes and Policies of the NWU and of South Africa (the Higher Education Act 101 of 1997, as amended) will be met; and
- the academic requirements of the Participating Institutions as applicable from time to time will be adhered to.

## 3 Definitions

- a. A joint degree results from international academic collaboration between two or more institutions on a jointly defined and entirely shared study programme leading to a joint degree. This means that all Participating Institutions are responsible for the entire programme and not just their own separate parts.<sup>1</sup>
- b. A double degree results from international academic collaboration between two or more institutions on a jointly defined, but partially shared study programme with some areas being specific to each of the participating institutions while other areas are shared and lead to a double degree. This means that Participating Institutions are responsible for their own separate parts (the parts are mutually recognized by the participating institutions) but have a shared responsibility in respect of those parts of the programme which are shared.
- c. Participating Institutions shall refer to the NWU and the participating Institution as referred to in the cotutelle agreement (referred to in Appendix B).

## 4 Policy

It is the policy of the University that:

NWU may confer joint and double degrees at Master's and Doctoral level in collaboration with foreign (international) universities upon students who successfully completed the requirements of such degrees, it being understood that:

- the relevant legal requirements of the participating foreign Institution and the relevant legal requirement of the Statutes and Policies of the NWU and of South Africa (the Higher Education Act 101 of 1997, as amended) will be met;
- it is only awarded within bilateral agreements (i.e. between NWU and a foreign university or between NWU and a consortium of universities);
- the academic requirements of the Participating Institutions as applicable from time to time will be adhered to; and

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.uib.no/education/collaboration/uiibs-involvement-in-joint-degrees-and-programmes/central-concepts-and-definitions>, 2010

- joint supervision for each candidate will be guided by a cotutelle agreed between the Participating Institutions and the candidate (of which a template is attached hereto in Appendix B).

This policy is applied in accordance with the relevant guidelines, rules and procedures made and amended from time to time. (See Appendices A and B).

# RULES AND GUIDELINES TO THE POLICY: JOINT AND DOUBLE DEGREES AT MASTER'S AND DOCTORAL LEVEL WITH FOREIGN UNIVERSITIES

## 1 Preamble

NWU confers joint and double Master's and Doctoral degrees upon a candidate on completion of a collaborative programme established by the Participating Institutions. It is characterised by:

- a. Joint supervision as per cotutelle agreed upon, for each candidate as agreed upon per cotutelle (of which a template is attached hereto in Appendix B);
- b. A degree awarded for one master's or doctoral degree, conferring the right to use the respective national titles; and
- c. The joint or double degree will be expressed conferred in the form of two degree certificates in the format permissible by the Participating Institutions at the time of award,
  - EITHER

one from each participating institution, indicating on each degree certificate that there has been joint supervision and that the two degree certificates jointly refer to a single deed, with the name of the Participating Institutions specifically mentioned so that it cannot be mistaken for certifying separate degrees,

- OR

(subject to approval by the Participating Institutions' respective senate and council consents at the time of the award) jointly issue a single degree supplement containing the names and logos of the Participating Institutions with the signatures of the representatives (the Rector, Vice-Chancellor and Registrar) of the Participating Institutions, the full name of the candidate including place and date of birth, the respective names of the qualifications of the Participating Institutions awarded, the title of the thesis and the date of graduation at the Participating Institutions.

## 2 Objectives

- a. The policy is motivated by a common desire to expand research, scientific co-operation and the mobility of researchers through the provision of joint / double degrees jointly supervised and certified. It provides for master's and doctoral degrees in any field of study in which both Participating Institutions have the right to offer such programmes.
- b. The policy supports the NWU Framework for Internationalisation which aims to:
  - i. prepare NWU students for both service as well as leadership in an increasingly interdependent world;
  - ii. establish the NWU as a sought-after, world-class, institution of higher learning and research that attracts preeminent academics and scholars from around the globe.
  - iii. position the NWU as an internationally recognised university of consequence.

## 3 Guiding Principles

- a. A cotutelle agreement (in the form of Appendix B) must be drawn up for each candidate stipulating the field of study, the name of the candidate, the names of the supervisors, and other matters pertaining to the particular candidate's study programme and costs relating thereto.
- b. Arrangements regarding finances, social security, insurances, visa, etc. will be agreed upon and dealt with by the deans of the relevant faculties at the Participating Institutions supported by the International

Offices of these institutions, in close consultation with the candidate. These arrangements will be stipulated in the cotutelle agreement for each candidate (Appendix B).

- c. All partners shall aim to make a substantially equal - however not necessarily equal - contribution to the supervision of the candidate.
- d. Participating Institutions: Agreements between Participating Institutions will be guided by:
  - i. A fit with the vision and mission of Participating Institutions;
  - ii. Addition of value to for Participating Institutions;
  - iii. Participating Institutions having the required expertise and appropriate infrastructure in the research area in which the joint or double degree is to be awarded in;
- e. Supervision (for research)
  - i. The candidate shall carry out research under the supervision of a supervisor from each Participating Institution.
  - ii. The supervisors shall have the legal right to fulfil the role of supervisor in their respective home institutions.
  - iii. The supervisors undertake to carry out to the full extent their role as defined by the regulations of the Participating Institutions and to support each other in the execution of their duties as supervisors.
  - iv. The supervisors shall confer regularly with regard to the progress of the candidate's research project.
  - v. The supervisors shall see to it that the candidate conducts his/her research efforts during substantial periods spent at each of the Participating Institutions.
  - vi. The length of time spent at each University will be jointly defined by the supervisors.
- f. Rules pertaining to the candidate:
  - i. The candidate shall spend alternate or consecutive study / research periods at each of the Participating Institutions.
  - ii. The study / research periods are to be agreed in joint consultation between the candidate and the supervisors and specified in the cotutelle agreement for each candidate. The candidate will divide his/her time for research / study between the Participating Institutions during the agreed study period, according to a schedule agreed upon by the Participating Institutions. The exact arrangement of the stays will be determined by the supervisors in consultation with the candidate.
  - iii. Travelling and accommodation expenses will be specified in the cotutelle agreement for each candidate.
- g. In case of co-authored papers the stipulations of the cotutelle agreement for each candidate will apply.
- h. Arrangements to safeguard and divide any intellectual property that may be generated as a result of this agreement will meet the Rules of Intellectual Property of both Participating Institutions as well as the legislation framework of the national governments. As a general point of departure the Participating Institutions will be equal partners in respect of any such intellectual property created as result of specific research governed by a cotutelle agreement and will negotiate in good faith and an arm's length with each other regarding the prosecution and commercialization thereof.
- i. Copyright: the results of the research performed by the candidate will be equally available to the Participating Institutions signing the present agreement for publication purposes. The production of the dissertation / thesis subject as well as the publication, the use, and the protection of the research are of common interest to the Participating Institutions and should therefore be reasonably communicated in compliance with the procedures specific to each institution and country with the view of allowing the other Participating Institution the opportunity to comment on content that may be confidential, reputational or otherwise sensitive BEFORE the publication thereof.
- j. A joint thesis / dissertation examination committee shall be appointed in consultation, meeting all the requirements of both Participating Institutions. The committee will be chaired by a member of the committee who is a full professor in a cognate field of study at either Participating Institutions.
- k. The joint thesis / dissertation committee is responsible for the examinations process and to prepare a recommendation that will serve at the Senates (or equivalent academic body) of the Participating Institutions.

- I. NWU counts students who are enrolled for joint and double degrees as full Master's or Doctoral degree students of the University in the case of research Master's and Doctoral degrees. This number is reported to the Department of Education via HEMIS. Exceptions may be made in the case of a coursework Master's degree where, for example, subsidy may only be claimed for those modules taken at NWU but the thesis / dissertation may be claimed for in full, if completed under joint supervision.

**COTUTELLE AGREEMENT (DRAFT PRECEDENT)**

This Agreement sets out the guidelines for co-operation

Between

VU University Amsterdam (VUA), 1105 De Boele Ave, Amsterdam, The Netherlands, hereby represented by its Rector, Prof Dr L.M. Bouter

and

North-West University (NWU), Office of the Institutional Registrar, Building C1, 53 Borchard Street, Potchefstroom, South Africa, hereby represented by its Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Prof Frederik van Niekerk.

referred to as the 'the Participating Institutions' in this document for the joint supervision of the doctoral dissertation of:

Name, candidate \_\_\_\_\_

**1. Admission**

It is a condition that the doctoral degree candidate satisfies the admission requirement at each of the two Participating Institutions and has been/will be admitted to an approved doctoral degree programme at both Participating Institutions.

**2. Funding**

The candidate's doctoral education is financed as follows:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### 3. Organized academic training

The candidate's programme (project, theoretical syllabus etc) shall satisfy the regulations/doctoral degree programme of both Participating Institutions.

### 4. Title of the dissertation

The two Participating Institutions approve a joint arrangement for a doctoral degree and a joint doctoral dissertation, which when the latter shall be defended at a disputation. The title of the dissertation to be prepared is:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### 5. Registration

The doctoral degree candidate is to be registered at the two Participating Institutions for the following period of agreement:

from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

It shall be possible to complete the research work within the period of agreement, of which a net period of 3 years is dedicated to the candidate's doctoral degree training. Only exceptionally may the duration be prolonged. This may only be done upon request of both the principal supervisors, and provided the two Participating Institutions are in favour thereof. Such a request should be made 3 months before the expiry of the period of the agreement. The decision is to be formulated in an appendix to the present Agreement.

### 6. Supervisors

The candidate shall have at least one supervisor at each institution. Both supervisors are responsible for the progress of the doctoral degree work.

From VUA:

Name, supervisor \_\_\_\_\_ is the principal/joint supervisor.

From NWU:

Name, supervisor \_\_\_\_\_ is the principal/ joint supervisor.

The supervisors undertake to perform joint exercise of their advisory function in respect of the doctoral degree candidate with the current regulations at each institution. They also undertake to consult each other regularly concerning the progress of the research work.

### 7. Residency and research periods at the Participating Institutions

The doctoral degree candidate has planned to spend time at two Participating Institutions in the following manner:



VUA, from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

NWU from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

## **8. Work space**

The candidate is entitled to a work space at both Participating Institutions in those periods when he/she is present there.

## **9. Reporting**

The candidate and supervisors shall deliver separate annual reports on progress to both Participating Institutions.

## **10. Dissertation**

The dissertation shall be written and defended in English, or another language both Participating Institutions agree upon. The dissertation shall bear the imprint of the logo of both Participating Institutions and the cotutelle relationship shall be clear from the cover/title page of the dissertation.

## **11. Public dissertation**

Both Participating Institutions take cognisance of the fact that no restrictions may be placed on the making public and publishing of the results or of the dissertation. Where the candidate is the sole author of the doctoral degree dissertation, he or she alone has the copyright to the work. Where the doctoral degree dissertation consists of a collection of articles and a summary, the candidate alone will have the copyright to those parts that are the result of his or her independent effort.

## **12. Use of the results**

Both Participating Institutions have the right to use the results and the dissertation for the purposes of teaching and research activities. Separate agreements shall be written for works that may lead to patents.

## **13. Appointment of an adjudication committee**

The adjudication committee shall be appointed as per the Collaboration Agreement between the Participating Institutions.

## **14. Disputation**

The dissertation shall be defended as agreed to in the Collaboration Agreement between the Participating Institutions.

## 15. Degree

After the Degree of Philosophiae Doctor (PhD) has been awarded, the Participating Institutions shall confer a joint doctoral degree. The joint degree will be conferred in the form of two degree certificates in the format permissible by the Participating Institutions at the time of award, EITHER one from each participating institution, indicating on each degree certificate that there has been joint supervision and that the two degree certificates jointly refer to a single deed, with the name of the Participating Institutions specifically mentioned so that it cannot be mistaken for certifying separate degrees, OR (subject to approval by the Participating Institutions' respective senate and council at the time of the award) jointly issue a single degree supplement containing the names and logos of the Participating Institutions with the signatures of the representatives (the Rector, Vice-Chancellor and Registrar) of the Participating Institutions, the full name of the candidate including place and date of birth, the respective names of the qualifications of the Participating Institutions awarded, the title of the thesis and the date of graduation at the Participating Institutions. The Participating Institutions shall each present a degree / diploma, written in Latin or English, to the candidate. The candidate must sign a declaration that the thesis has not been submitted for a degree qualification to any other university outside of this particular agreement.

## 16. Diploma / Certificate

Each of the two Participating Institutions will issue its own diploma / certificate. It shall be clear from the diploma / certificate and/or from a supplement that this is a cotutelle degree.

## 17. Financial compensation

Each institution is entitled to the financial compensation to which a doctoral degree gives rise in the home country.

As agreed by:

### Supervisor at VU University Amsterdam

Prof Dr \_\_\_\_\_ Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

### Supervisor at NWU

Prof Dr \_\_\_\_\_ Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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