



Higher Degrees Policy of the NWU

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Higher Degrees Policy of the NWU

Against the background of the dream to be an internationally recognised university in Africa, distinguished for engaged scholarship, social responsiveness and an ethic of care, the council of the North-West University (NWU) has adopted this Higher Degrees Policy on 21 November 2019 to pursue, accommodate and provide a fair and functional higher degrees environment across all components of the university.

1 INTERPRETATION AND APPLICATION

This policy must be interpreted and applied in a manner consistent with the

- 1.1 The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996;
- 1.2 Higher Education Act, 101 of 1997;
- 1.3 The Statute of the North-West University (2017) (“the Statute”), and
- 1.4 Relevant policies of the national government relating to higher degrees having a binding effect on the higher education sector.

2 DEFINITIONS

In this policy and related documents, specifically those referred to in paragraph 6;

“**the A-Rules**” refers to the General Academic Rules of the NWU;

“**Higher Degrees**” refers to qualifications at the masters and doctoral level, equivalent to level 9 and 10 of the Higher Education Qualifications Framework (HEQF), offered at the NWU;

“**Higher Degrees Administration**” (**HDA**) is a sub department of SALA (Student Academic Life Cycle Administration)

“**the Higher Degrees Committee**” (**HDC**) refers to the subcommittee of Senate which provides expert advice to Senate on matters relating to higher degrees.

3 PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE POLICY

- 3.1 The purpose of this policy is to provide a unifying framework for the administration, governance and quality management of all higher degrees programmes at the NWU.
- 3.2 This policy applies to all masters and doctoral degrees, equivalent to level 9 and 10 of the Higher Education Qualifications Framework (HEQF), offered at the NWU.

4 POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of the NWU –

- 4.1 to provide academic programmes at the general, research and professional master’s and doctoral levels;
- 4.2 that these academic programmes be provided in areas of expertise as provided for in the research and innovation policy of the NWU, ensuring that adequate capacity to support such training is available;
- 4.3 that ownership of the academic programmes resides with the relevant academic units, in order to ensure

effective coordination, monitoring, reporting and quality management of the student academic life cycle;

- 4.4 that professional degrees will, where applicable, be aligned with the requirements and guidelines set by the professional bodies concerned;

5 MANAGEMENT AND ROLES

- 5.1 Senate is responsible for the coordination, monitoring and implementation of this policy.
- 5.2 The HDC approves and monitors the implementation of the faculty higher degrees plans and the rules contemplated in paragraph 6.
- 5.3 The HDC provides expert advice to the senate on the development and implementation of planning associated with teaching-learning and research and innovation as reflected in the higher degrees plans and rules.
- 5.4 The successful implementation and execution of higher degrees programmes are monitored by the respective faculty boards.
- 5.5 The Higher Degrees Administration Office provides centralized administrative support to master's and doctoral students, faculties and the HDC.
- 5.6 Faculties are responsible for the management of the quality of master's and doctoral programmes offered within each faculty.
- 5.7 The chairperson of the HDC must submit an annual report to the senate.
- 5.8 The information relating to all higher degree programmes must be captured and made accessible in the NWU student information management systems.

6 HIGHER DEGREES PLANS AND GUIDELINES

- 6.1 The senate must adopt and implement comprehensive NWU Higher Degrees rules and provide guidelines for the implementation thereof.
- 6.2 Each faculty must develop and implement faculty higher degrees plan and guidelines in consultation with the senate which is consistent with this policy and the NWU Higher Degrees rules contemplated in 6.1.
- 6.3 The HDC (supported by HDA and the faculties) is responsible for the implementation and execution of the higher degrees plans and rules contemplated in 6.1 and 6.2.
- 6.4 This policy must regularly be revised by the Research Support Department and submitted to council for approval at least once every five years.
- 6.5 The higher degrees plans and rules contemplated in 6.1 and 6.2 must be designed to bring about a higher degrees management environment in which –
 - 6.5.1 the interests of higher degrees students and their supervisors or promoters are maintained at the highest level;
 - 6.5.2 higher degrees students and their supervisors or promoters are treated in a fair and transparent way, guided by an agreement and code of conduct provided for in the Higher Degrees Manual;
 - 6.5.3 the roles of higher degrees students and their supervisors or promoters are clearly defined, and
 - 6.5.4 the decision-making processes that deal with the governance and administration of higher degrees students are effective and clearly defined.