



GENERAL ACADEMIC RULES OF THE NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY

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GENERAL ACADEMIC RULES OF THE NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY

Preamble

WHEREAS the senate is responsible for the regulation of all teaching, learning and research functions, as well as for the academic support functions of the university and for the determination of policy and rules concerning all academic matters; and

AFTER consultation with the relevant academic and support structures of the university regarding the appropriate manner in which students' admission and registration, the course of their studies, assessment and related matters should be regulated; and

TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION the provisions of the Higher Education Act (101 of 1997), the Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework (HEQSF) (CHE; 2014) and the Statute of the North-West University (NWU);

SENATE MAKES THESE RULES for the effective and orderly execution of the academic processes of the university. Following approval by the council at its meeting of 16 November 2023 these rules became effective in the following manner from 01 January 2024 to coincide with the roll-out implementation plan of the NWU SIS/NWU Student

Effective from 01 January 2024	Section 1: General provisions Rules 1.1 to 1.8
	Section 2: Provisions for undergraduate qualifications Rule 2.1 and Rule 2.2
	Section 3: Provisions for the bachelor honours degree and the postgraduate diploma Rule 3.1 and Rule 3.2
	Section 4: Provisions for general and professional master's degrees Rule 4.2, Rule 4.3, Rule 4.4 and Rule 4.5
	Section 5: Provisions for research and professional doctoral degrees Rule 5.2 and Rule 5.5.
Effective from 01 January 2025:	NWU General Academic Rules fully effective

1 General provisions

1.1 Application and interpretation of the General Academic Rules

- 1.1.1 These rules must be read with and applied subject to the Higher Education Act (101 of 1997), the Higher Education Qualifications Sub-framework (HEQSF) and the Statute of the North-West University, and in conjunction with rules, guidelines and policies as determined by the senate and the council, such as, but not limited to the Admissions Policy for the governance, management and administration of teaching, learning and research, as well as the schedule of payable fees as determined annually by the university.

- 1.1.2 These rules apply to all senate-approved academic programmes that lead to formal qualifications listed in the Programme and Qualification Mix (PQM) of the university, regardless of the mode of delivery. Where applicable, the rules distinguish between provisions that apply to programmes delivered by means of the contact and distance modes of delivery (referred to in these rules as “contact” and “distance” qualifications and programmes).
- 1.1.3 These rules take precedence over faculty rules.
- 1.1.4 The Glossary of Teaching-Learning Related Concepts and Designations contained in the Appendix determines the interpretation and application of these rules.
- 1.1.5 Where these rules require or allow the exercise of a discretion, the senate may review and substitute a decision taken in the exercise of such discretion.
- 1.1.6 Where functions and decision-making authority are entrusted by these rules to persons or structures, senate or a duly mandated sub-committee of senate may at any time resolve to require the person or structure concerned to report on the performance of the function concerned or the making of the decision, and senate may, within the limits of reasonableness, taking into account the implications for those affected thereby, replace or revoke the act or decision concerned.
- 1.1.7 All decisions made by executive deans or other persons in terms of these rules must be recorded appropriately by the responsible academic or administrative unit.
- 1.1.8 The executive dean may, in writing, delegate any power or function vested in him/her in terms of these rules to any faculty sub-committee, the deputy dean, an academic director or deputy director. Any person aggrieved by the exercise of such a delegated power or function may, within a reasonable time, request the executive dean to reconsider a decision made in terms of such delegated authority, and the executive dean may confirm, replace or amend such a decision or refer it back to the person or committee to whom decision-making authority was delegated for reconsideration.
- 1.1.9 A person who demonstrates the intention to be associated with the university, by applying for admission, or being admitted to the university for formal study, is subject to these rules.

1.2 Directives for qualifications and programmes

- 1.2.1 The HEQSF provides the basis and minimum requirements for the qualification or programme descriptors and quality assurance of all qualification types offered by the university.
- 1.2.2 Only those qualifications that form part of the PQM of the university may be marketed, offered and conferred by the university.
- 1.2.3 The internal qualification standards of the university are published in faculty yearbooks to ensure compliance with the HEQSF and with prescripts by statutory bodies, where applicable.
- 1.2.4 The senate may approve faculty rules that allow for a maximum additional credit allocation of ten percent (10%) more than the minimum required total credits for a qualification specified in the HEQSF.
- 1.2.5 The additional credit allocation contemplated in Rule 1.2.4 may be exceeded in cases where it is required by a statutory body competent to recognize or accredit a qualification.
- 1.2.6 Amendments to the credit structure, the offering of modules (including the inclusion of electives in programmes), module outcomes or curriculum outlay of a programme leading to a qualification are subject to approval by the Senate Committee for Academic Standards (SCAS).
- 1.2.7 In cases where an approved qualification undergoes a major change to its purpose, outcomes, field of study, or modules, application must be made via SCAS for the external approval of such changes.
- 1.2.8 Where ten or fewer students enrol for a module, the executive dean concerned must initiate a clearly defined module-viability study with a view either to the phasing-out of such a module or for the purposes of motivating the continuation of the module.
- 1.2.9 The outcome of the module-viability study referred to in Rule 1.2.8 must be reported to the senate via the relevant faculty board, followed by communication by the executive dean to prospective students who would wish to register for modules identified for phasing-out.

1.3 Faculty rules

- 1.3.1 Every faculty board makes proposals to the senate for the adoption of faculty rules with regard to the requirements for qualifications and programmes that are part of the PQM of the university and offered by the faculty concerned, taking into account where applicable, of the requirements of the relevant statutory body.
- 1.3.2 In addition to matters provided for in these rules, faculty rules may, where appropriate, provide for arrangements that may be necessary for the accommodation of programme-specific requirements and faculty-specific procedures and structures.
- 1.3.3 The minimum and maximum duration of study for a qualification, the composition of the curricula of qualifications or programmes, and the credit structure of programmes leading to a qualification, are set out in the faculty rules.
- 1.3.4 Faculty rules are published in the yearbook of the university pertaining to the faculty concerned and apply to the current year of publication.
- 1.3.5 Where faculty rules are amended and approved by senate before the next version of the yearbook is published, reasonable steps must be taken to bring the amendments to the attention of students who are affected thereby.

1.4 Recognition as a student of the university

- 1.4.1 To be recognised as a student of the university for the purposes of these rules, a person must have been admitted to the university and must have been registered for a programme leading to the attainment of a qualification.
- 1.4.2 In order to continue with studies at the university, a returning student who has been admitted and registered at the university must register annually in accordance with these rules.

1.5 Application, selection and admission to the university

1.5.1 Application and admission

- 1.5.1.1 A prospective student applies for admission to the university by completing the prescribed application form and submitting it together with such documents required by the NWU in accordance with applicable policies and rules.
- 1.5.1.2 The general requirements for admission to all formal contact and distance qualifications and related programmes offered by the university, as well as the provisions for conditional exemptions, are set out in the Admissions Policy of the NWU as recommended by the Senate Admissions Requirements Committee, adopted by the senate and approved by council. (URL: http://www.nwu.ac.za/content/policy_rules).
- 1.5.1.3 Admission requirements must be published in faculty yearbooks.

1.5.2 Selection

- 1.5.2.1 The university reserves the right to set selection criteria, in addition to the minimum admission requirements, and apply such criteria to admit or refuse admission to specific qualifications and programmes, taking into consideration the university's targets for the size (total number of students) and shape (fields of study and diversity profile) of the student population, and the capacity available to the university to offer the qualifications and programmes concerned.
- 1.5.2.2 The allocation of a number for identification purposes to an applicant who meets the minimum admission requirements does not constitute or create a right to be admitted to the university as a student.

1.5.3 Admission and advanced standing on grounds of recognition of prior learning

- 1.5.3.1 In accordance with the Senate-approved Rules on Teaching-Learning and Assessment, an executive dean may, by means of the recognition of prior learning (RPL) process, grant admission to an applicant who does not meet the minimum admission requirements for a programme or a qualification, or grant advanced standing to such an applicant.
- 1.5.3.2 Only proven informal or non-formal learning may be taken into consideration by means of RPL, the process of equivalence-setting between such learning and formal modules must be documented, and its outcome must be recorded on the official student record.

- 1.5.3.3 Where a student was granted exemption for one or more modules as a consequence of RPL, the remaining credits required for the qualification must be obtained by completing the relevant programme.
- 1.5.3.4 The maximum portion of a qualification or programme from which a student may be exempted by means of RPL is fifty percent (50%) of the credits of the full qualification.
- 1.5.3.5 A standardised and aligned process implemented across faculties must provide details in respect of the implementation of RPL referred to in Rule 1.5.3.1.

1.6 Credit accumulation and transfer

- 1.6.1 In accordance with the Rules on Teaching-Learning and Assessment, an executive dean may, by means of the process of credit accumulation and transfer (CAT) recognise and transfer the credits a student has obtained in a cognate learning programme towards a qualification or programme to which the student wishes to seek admission, and adjust the minimum study period for the completion of a programme offered by the university within the framework of Rules 2 to 5.
- 1.6.2 Credit accumulation and transfer may only be granted for credits obtained during studies towards a formal qualification, including credits obtained for modules taken for non-degree purposes.
- 1.6.3 Credit accumulation and transfer applies to –
 - 1.6.3.1 a student of the university who is registered for, but has not completed a programme, and who wishes to change to a different programme linked to the same qualification;
 - 1.6.3.2 a student of the university who is registered for, but has not completed a programme, and who wishes to change to a different programme linked to a different qualification;
 - 1.6.3.3 a student registered at another recognised higher education institution who has not completed the qualification or programme at that institution, and who wishes to register for the same or a different qualification or programme at the university;
 - 1.6.3.4 a student who has completed a qualification at the university or at another recognised higher education institution who wishes to enrol for a programme leading to another qualification at the university, and
 - 1.6.3.5 qualifications that consist entirely or partially of coursework modules or components, but not to qualifications that consist purely of a research component.
- 1.6.4 Credit recognition and transfer can only be granted to a student who meets the minimum admission requirements of the qualification and programme for which the student wishes to register.
- 1.6.5 A standardised and aligned process implemented across faculties must provide details in respect of the implementation of CAT referred to in Rule 1.6.1.

1.7 Prerequisite and corequisite modules

- 1.7.1 The requirements in respect of prerequisite and corequisite modules must be specified in faculty rules.
- 1.7.2 Prerequisite modules must have been passed or a specified minimum mark obtained before a student may register for a successive module.
- 1.7.3 Corequisite modules must be taken in a semester or year prior to or in the same semester as the module for which these are regarded as corequisite modules.

1.8 Maximum student credit load

A student may normally not be registered for a credit load of more than 1.2 FTE credits in any given academic year, but may, subject to permission granted expressly by the executive dean concerned in order to enable the student to meet the progression requirements for continuation of study, or to meet the requirements for the completion of the qualification or programme for which the student is registered, be allowed in a specific academic year to register for a credit load of not more than 1.5 FTE credits. A student who wishes to be allowed an additional credit load, must apply for such via the student portal.

1.9 Registration

1.9.1 Annual registration

- 1.9.1.1 Every student must register annually in their personal capacity, by means of an electronic registration process for the learning components that are prescribed for the specific study year, in accordance with the faculty rules applicable to the qualification, programme and module(s) concerned.
- 1.9.1.2 A student is personally responsible to –
 - 1.9.1.2.1 ensure compliance with all the qualification, programme and module registration requirements and the completion and submission of the formal documents required for registration, and
 - 1.9.1.2.2 determine that there are no clashes in contact timetables or scheduled assessment opportunities between the modules for which the student registers.
- 1.9.1.3 The university reserves the right to refuse or cancel the registration of a student where an applicant provides false, incorrect or incomplete information or documentation material to register as a student, or where any other condition provided for in these rules is not satisfied.
- 1.9.1.4 Faculty rules provide for the requirements for active participation by students in specific qualifications or programmes and students may not register for modules in which they are unable to or intend not to actively participate.
- 1.9.1.5 In order to receive credits for a specific module a student must be registered for such module and pass it.
- 1.9.1.6 Registration periods for the various levels and modes of study are annually determined in the university calendar.
- 1.9.1.7 A student who was registered during the second-semester registration period of the previous year must in the subsequent academic years report for registration during the first-semester annual registration period.
- 1.9.1.8 In order to be registered, a student or the entity that has granted the student a bursary, must pay the prescribed registration and minimum tuition fees prescribed by the university.
- 1.9.1.9 An official proof of registration is testament of a successful registration. .
- 1.9.1.10 A registered student has the responsibility to ensure that their personal details required for official communication by the university to the student remain up to date by promptly submitting all relevant changes in the prescribed form via the student portal.
- 1.9.1.11 Official correspondence from the NWU to students may take place by means of any of the following channels: the NWU student e-mail address, cell phone number and postings on the student portal. It is the responsibility of the student to monitor these communication channels.

1.9.2 Submission to rules and resolutions

By signing and submitting the completed prescribed application and registration forms, the applicant or registered student agrees to be bound by the applicable rules, policies and resolutions of the university until the registration of the student is terminated.

1.9.3 Active enrolment

- 1.9.3.1 A registered student must actively participate in the teaching, learning and assessment activities of every module for which such student is registered in order to be deemed to be an enrolled student for subsidy purposes.
- 1.9.3.2 Sitting for an examination alone does not constitute proof of active enrolment.
- 1.9.3.3 Proof of active enrolment must be provided annually by the responsible academic unit on the prescribed census dates of the academic year concerned.
- 1.9.3.4 The registration of a student who fails to participate satisfactorily in the activities referred to in Rule 1.9.3.1 is subject to review in accordance with the progression requirements provided for in Rule 1.15.

1.9.4 Amendment, cancelation, and discontinuation of registration

- 1.9.4.1 Subject to the applicable faculty rules and the applicable provisions regarding payable fees, a student may apply via the student portal and within the period indicated for that purpose on the annual university calendar, to amend, cancel or discontinue registration.
- 1.9.4.2 Registration may be cancelled for a qualification, programme or a module, and entails that a student withdraws from the qualification, programme or module before formal tuition begins.
- 1.9.4.3 Timeous cancellation of registration is not reflected in a student's academic record and a part of the registration fees, as well as the paid tuition fees, may be reimbursed.
- 1.9.4.4 The university reserves the right to cancel any erroneous registration.
- 1.9.4.5 Discontinuation of registration entails that a student withdraws from a qualification, programme or module after the commencement of formal tuition.
- 1.9.4.6 Discontinuation of registration is reflected as such on the student's academic record and does not entitle the student to receive reimbursement of registration or tuition fees.

1.9.5 Concurrent registration at more than one institution

- 1.9.5.1 A student registered at the university may not register concurrently for a qualification at another university except with the approval of the executive dean concerned, who may grant such approval only if the student has met the minimum residence requirements at either one of the universities.
- 1.9.5.2 With the approval of the executive dean concerned, a student may register for non-degree purposes at the university and as a student for a formal qualification at another university.
- 1.9.5.3 The executive dean concerned may in writing, and with the concurrence of the other institution concerned, grant a student permission to take specific modules offered by another university, including exit modules required for the completion of a qualification or programme or modules that the student is not able to attend at the university, or modules that are not offered by the university, provided that such student continues to be registered as a student of the university.
- 1.9.5.4 A student taking modules at another university in accordance with Rule 1.9.5.3 is not liable to pay tuition fees for the equivalent modules of the university.
- 1.9.5.5 A student may be granted permission by the executive dean concerned to register for a maximum of twenty percent (20%) of the total credit value of the coursework component of the qualification or programme (including coursework master's degrees and professional master's degrees, but excluding research master's degree by dissertation and doctoral programmes) at another institution.
- 1.9.5.6 A student to whom approval has been granted to enrol for one or more modules or for another qualification at another institution must remain enrolled in a qualification at the NWU.

1.9.6 Concurrent registration for more than one qualification at the university

In exceptional circumstances the executive dean concerned may grant a student permission in writing to register simultaneously for more than one qualification or programme at the university, subject to the limitation on credit load provided for in Rule 1.8, and provided that the admission requirements for the second qualification or programme are met.

1.9.6.1 The use of the university's facilities by registered students

Subject to specific exceptions granted by the deputy registrar, only registered students are entitled to utilise the university's facilities.

1.10 Protection of personal education-related information

- 1.10.1 The NWU is committed to protecting personal information and data. [Access the complete NWU Privacy Statement here: https://www.nwu.ac.za/NWU_Privacy_Statement]
- 1.10.2 The extent to which a student's personal or academic-related information may be disclosed to a third party is determined in the course of the annual registration process, but the student may at any time withdraw or amend permission granted to disclose such information in writing by submitting a request via the student portal to the deputy registrar.
- 1.10.3 The university may disclose personal or academic-related information regarding a student to a third party only in accordance with applicable legislation, including the Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA) and the Promotion of Access to Information Act (PAIA).

1.11 Exemption from practical work or class attendance in a module

- 1.11.1 Where a student has failed a module that has a practical component, but has passed the practical component, the student may apply in writing via the student portal to the executive dean concerned to be exempted from the practical component when the student repeats the module.
- 1.11.2 The granting of exemption in terms of Rule 1.11.1 and Rule 1.11.4 is subject to relevant faculty rules and is valid only for the year following the year when the student failed the module.
- 1.11.3 If exemption from the practical component of a module has been granted, the student must register for the module in the subsequent year and must make the necessary arrangements with the lecturer concerned to have the mark that was achieved for the practical component of the module transferred, either to form part of the module participation mark or of the aggregate of the continuous-assessment task list, and must comply with the relevant requirements contemplated in Rule 1.12.
- 1.11.4 Where a student fails a module that has a class attendance requirement, but, in the opinion of the academic director concerned, did meet the class attendance requirements, the student may apply in writing via the student portal to the executive dean concerned to be exempted from the class attendance requirement when the student repeats the module.
- 1.11.5 If exemption from class attendance has been granted in respect of a module, the student must register for the module in the subsequent year and must comply with the relevant requirements contemplated in Rule 1.12.

1.12 Assessment

1.12.1 Determination of module mark

- 1.12.1.1 In the case of modules presented in the traditional assessment practice, the module mark for all coursework modules is based on a combination of a module participation mark and an examination mark in a predetermined ratio.
- 1.12.1.2 In the case of continuous-assessment modules, the module mark is based on the weighted average of the assessments prescribed for the module, according to the weights allotted to the different assessment tasks.
- 1.12.1.3 The method of calculating the final module mark must be communicated effectively to the students and must be published on relevant platforms when the teaching of the module begins.

1.12.2 Requirements for admission to the examination for modules presented in the traditional assessment practice

- 1.12.2.1 Subject to Rule 1.12.2.3 a student is required to achieve a module participation mark of at least forty percent (40%) and meet applicable statutory requirements in order to be admitted to the examination in the module concerned.
- 1.12.2.2 Subject to Rule 1.12.2.3 an adequate module participation mark provides admission to no more than two consecutive examination opportunities scheduled within the period that the university determines annually for the conduct of all assessment activities in the academic year concerned.
- 1.12.2.3 Modules where no participation mark is required or where an alternative proof of participation must be provided for admission to the examination must be published in accordance with Rule 1.12.1.3.

1.12.3 Requirements for passing a module

- 1.12.3.1 Requirements for passing a module presented in the traditional assessment practice:
 - 1.12.3.1.1 The sub-minimum for examinations in all coursework modules is forty percent (40%) except where a higher sub- minimum is set in the applicable faculty rules.
 - 1.12.3.2 A student passes a coursework module if a final module mark of at least fifty percent (50%) and/or applicable statutory requirements are attained, taking into account the provisions regarding the examination sub-minimum and the ratio between the module participation and examination mark as published in accordance with Rule 1.12.1.3.
 - 1.12.3.2.1 A final mark of at least fifty percent (50%) is required to pass a research module.

- 1.12.3.3 Requirements for passing a module presented in the continuous assessment practice:
- 1.12.3.3.1 In cases where a module is assessed on the basis of continuous assessment, the final module mark is based on the weight accorded to the assessment tasks as approved by the relevant faculty board.
- 1.12.3.3.2 A minimum of four assessment tasks per module must be performed, one of which may be a thematically clustered assessment task for which the combined assessment mark may not exceed twenty percent (20%) of the module mark.
- 1.12.3.3.3 The maximum weight of any assessment task may not exceed thirty percent (30%) of the total weighting of the module mark.
- 1.12.3.3.4 A student must obtain a weighted average of at least fifty percent (50%) and the requisite applicable statutory-body requirements to pass the module.

1.12.4 **Module outcome**

- 1.12.4.1 Where a student fails a module, the student must, subject to Rule 1.11, repeat the module in its entirety.
- 1.12.4.2 A student passes a module with distinction if a final module mark of at least seventy-five percent (75%) is achieved.

1.12.5 **Examination opportunities applicable to the traditional assessment practice**

The rules for the various qualification levels and types determine the number of examination opportunities that are available to students and are published in the faculty yearbooks.

1.12.6 **Additional time or special requests during examinations taken in the traditional assessment practice**

- 1.12.6.1 A student may apply in writing to the Student Counselling and Development Services for additional time or special requests during an examination, supported by an explanation of the circumstances giving rise to the application and a medical certificate, where applicable. Such an application made via the student portal must be submitted 14 days before the scheduled date of the assessment sitting concerned.
- 1.12.6.2 Upon approval of the application, the student will be referred to the SALA Assessment Department for implementation of the required measures during the relevant examination period.

1.12.7 **Final additional examination or assessment**

- 1.12.7.1 For modules taken in the traditional assessment practice:
- 1.12.7.1.1 A student who, having used one or both examination opportunities provided for in the rules relating to the various qualification types and levels, has passed all coursework modules but one required for the completion of a programme leading to a qualification, may qualify for a final additional assessment opportunity in the outstanding module, provided that –
- 1.12.7.1.1.1 the student was registered for the module in the previous semester in which it was offered during which all the other requirements for the attainment of the qualification were complied with;
- 1.12.7.1.1.2 the student has achieved a forty percent (40%) participation mark in the module for admission to the examination; and
- 1.12.7.1.1.3 the student sits for the final assessment for the applicable module in the following examination or assessment period scheduled in the university calendar.
- 1.12.7.1.2 The student must pay the required applicable fee for the final additional assessment opportunity but is not required to re-register for the qualification or programme concerned.
- 1.12.7.1.3 The maximum mark that can be obtained for a module examined or assessed in a concession examination or assessment, is fifty percent (50%).
- 1.12.7.1.4 The participation mark is not taken into account for the award of the module mark in a concession examination or assessment.

- 1.12.7.2 For modules taken in the continuous-assessment practice–
- 1.12.7.2.1 a student who, having completed all assessment tasks required for the completion of a qualification or programme provided for in the rules relating to the various qualification types and levels but one, and who has obtained at least 40% average for the tasks, may qualify for a final additional assessment opportunity, provided that the student completes the final additional assessment for the applicable module in time before the scheduled assessment opportunity referred to in Rule 1.12.7.1.1;
- 1.12.7.2.2 the maximum mark that can be obtained for a module examined or assessed in a concession examination or assessment, is fifty percent (50%);
- 1.12.7.2.3 the marks obtained in respect of the assessment tasks are not taken into account for the award of the module mark in a concession examination , and
- 1.12.7.3 a student whose only outstanding module for the completion of a qualification or programme is based on a statutory-body requirement may qualify for an additional assessment opportunity to demonstrate proficiency of such requirements. The assessment must be completed under the same regulatory conditions as set in the initial assessment and must be completed by a date determined in the annual university calendar.

1.12.8 Access to and review of marked assessments

- 1.12.8.1 Requests for viewing assessment scripts, files or folders pertaining to a formal sit-down examination or assessment in accordance with the traditional assessment practice must be submitted to the faculty administrator concerned via the student portal.
- 1.12.8.2 An application to view a marked script, file or folder must be done as follows:
- 1.12.8.2.1 in respect to a module in a contact programme, the application must be submitted within five working days after the module examination results were published following the first examination opportunity, and within two working days following the second examination opportunity;
- 1.12.8.2.2 in respect to a module in a distance programme, the application must be submitted within ten working days, and
- 1.12.8.2.3 in respect of the continuous-assessment practice the application must be submitted within five days after the outcome of the assessment task was published;
- 1.12.8.3 A student may request that administrative errors in the calculation of the assessment mark found during the review of a marked assessment piece in accordance with Rule 1.12.8.2, be corrected or that the piece be remarked whether the assessment piece was reviewed by the student or not.
- 1.12.8.4 Requests for the remarking of assessment scripts, files, folders or tasks pertaining to a formal sit-down examination or assessment in accordance with the traditional assessment practice must be submitted to the faculty administrator concerned via the student portal.
- 1.12.8.5 An application for the remark of a marked script, file or folder must be done as follows:
- 1.12.8.5.1 in respect to a module in a contact programme, the application must be submitted within five working days after the module examination results were published following the first examination opportunity, and within two working days following the second examination opportunity, and
- 1.12.8.5.2 in respect to a module in a distance programme, the application must be submitted within ten working days.
- 1.12.8.6 A request for a remark of an assessment script, file, folder or task may be preceded by a discussion of the assessment by the student and the lecturer, subject leader or director concerned.
- 1.12.8.7 Remarking of an assessment task at the request of a student is subject to the payment of the applicable fee.
- 1.12.8.8 Where the remarking of the assessment task leads to a change in the assessment result, the original mark is replaced by the changed mark.
- 1.12.8.9 Marked assessment work and the associated memoranda must be viewed and remarked, where applicable, before the date set for finalising the assessment results as indicated in the annual university calendar.

1.12.9 Avoidance of conflict of interest

The executive dean must, in consultation with the academic director concerned, ensure that the risk of conflict of interest is limited to the minimum when supervisors, promoters, examiners, and moderators are appointed.

1.13 Maximum duration of study

1.13.1 For full-time contact students, the maximum duration of study, subject to prescripts of statutory bodies where relevant, is as follows:

- 1.13.1.1 One-year qualifications: two years.
- 1.13.1.2 Two-year qualifications: four years.
- 1.13.1.3 Three-year qualifications: five years.
- 1.13.1.4 Four-year qualifications: six years.
- 1.13.1.5 Master's degrees: three years.
- 1.13.1.6 Doctoral degrees: four years.

1.13.2 For part-time contact and distance students, the maximum duration of study, subject to prescripts of statutory bodies where relevant, is as follows:

- 1.13.2.1 One-year qualifications: three years.
- 1.13.2.2 Two-year qualifications: four years.
- 1.13.2.3 Three-year qualifications: six years.
- 1.13.2.4 Four-year qualifications: eight years.
- 1.13.2.5 Master's degrees: Four years.
- 1.13.2.6 Doctoral degrees: Five years.

1.13.3 For contact students in extended programmes, subject to prescripts of statutory bodies where relevant, the maximum duration of study is as follows:

- 1.13.3.1 Three-year qualifications: six years.
- 1.13.3.2 Four-year qualifications: seven years.

1.14 Monitoring of academic performance

- 1.14.1 A student is deemed not to have made satisfactory academic progress if, in a semester, the student achieves less than half the credits required for the qualification or programme concerned as prescribed in the relevant curriculum maps for the mode of delivery (contact or distance) and attendance mode (full-time or part-time).
- 1.14.2 A student whose academic performance is unsatisfactory must be given a written warning, alerting the student to the implications of unsatisfactory academic progress for the completion of the study programme. The written warning aims at providing a basis to review the unsatisfactory academic progress of the student, and for referral for appropriate support, including academic advice, supplemental instruction and study counselling.
- 1.14.3 Every school must monitor the academic progress of students who have received warning letters, and the school director must regularly report on warning letters issued to the faculty board concerned.
- 1.14.4 The supervisor or promoter of a postgraduate student must regularly submit a report on the progress made by a student on the research component of the qualification or programme concerned, and if such progress proves to be unsatisfactory, the student must be given a written warning by the executive dean concerned.

1.15 Progression requirements

- 1.15.1 In order to ensure that a sufficient percentage of the credit load of the qualification or programme for which the student is registered is completed within the maximum duration allowed for the study—
 - 1.15.1.1 a full-time contact student must obtain at least the following percentage of the total credits required for the year level of the qualification or programme for which the student is registered:
 - 1.15.1.1.1 one-year qualifications: 50%.
 - 1.15.1.1.2 two-year qualifications: 50%.
 - 1.15.1.1.3 three-year qualifications: 60%.
 - 1.15.1.1.4 four-year qualifications: 66%.

- 1.15.1.2 a part-time contact or a distance student must obtain at least the following percentage of the total credits required for the year level of the qualification or programme for which the student is registered:
 - 1.15.1.2.1 one-year qualifications: 33%.
 - 1.15.1.2.2 two-year qualifications: 50%.
 - 1.15.1.2.3 three-year qualifications: 50%.
 - 1.15.1.2.4 four-year qualifications: 55%.
- 1.15.1.3 a contact student in an extended programme must obtain at least the following percentage of the total credits required for the year level of the qualification or programme relevant for which the student is registered:
 - 1.15.1.3.1 three-year qualifications: 50%.
 - 1.15.1.3.2 four-year qualifications: 60%.
- 1.15.2 A student who fails to comply with the progression requirements provided for in Rule 1.15.1 does not automatically qualify to continue study in the qualification or programme concerned.
- 1.15.3 A higher-degree student must make satisfactory progress on the research component of the qualification or programme concerned to be allowed to proceed with the study.
- 1.15.4 After every examination period the executive dean concerned must, in consultation with the faculty management committee or other faculty structure concerned, review the academic records of all students to determine the students' compliance with the progression requirements.

1.16 Extension of period of study

The study period of an actively enrolled student who does not expect to complete a qualification or programme within the maximum duration allowed for the study may, on application submitted to the executive dean via the student portal before the end of the penultimate academic year, and on the recommendation of the deputy dean or academic director concerned, be extended by the executive dean.

1.17 Termination of studies

- 1.17.1 The executive dean concerned may, after determining that the relevant processes in accordance with Rule 1.14.2 and/or Rule 1.14.4 had not led to compliance with the applicable progression requirements, decide to terminate a student's registration.
- 1.17.2 Following a decision taken in terms of Rule 1.17.1 the student may, within ten days of the date of notice of such decision, submit to the relevant faculty administrator via the student portal a motivated request in the prescribed form for a reconsideration of the decision.
- 1.17.3 The executive dean's decision to grant or refuse a request for reconsideration submitted in terms of Rule 1.17.2 is final.
- 1.17.4 The executive dean reports all the decisions taken in terms of Rule 1.17.1 and Rule 1.17.3 to the registrar.
- 1.17.5 The executive dean concerned may direct the registrar to terminate a student's registration if such student –
 - 1.17.5.1 does not meet the requirements for annual registration as provided for in Rule 1.9.1.2, Rule 1.9.1.3, Rule 1.9.1.4 or Rule 1.9.1.8;
 - 1.17.5.2 does not meet the requirements for proof of active enrolment as provided for in Rule 1.9.3.1;
 - 1.17.5.3 has received two warnings with respect to unsatisfactory academic performance from the executive dean concerned as provided for in Rule 1.14.2 and/or Rule 1.14.4 and has subsequently failed to show satisfactory academic performance;
 - 1.17.5.4 does not meet the minimum progression requirements set out in Rule 1.15;
 - 1.17.5.5 fails to submit a research proposal as contemplated in Rule 4.11.5 or Rule 5.10.5;
 - 1.17.5.6 does not obtain an extension of time as provided for in Rule 1.16, or

- 1.17.5.7 fails, after having been granted an extension of time as provided for in Rule 1.16, to complete the study.
- 1.17.6 After every examination period the registrar must submit a report to senate on students whose studies have been terminated.
- 1.17.7 Notification of termination of study must be sent to students before the end of the next registration period.
- 1.17.8 A student whose studies have been terminated may apply for admission to another study programme but must, in the course of the application, mention the termination.
- 1.17.9 The executive dean concerned may set reasonable conditions for admission to another study programme as contemplated in Rule 1.17.8, and must report such conditions to the registrar.
- 1.17.10 An undergraduate student whose studies have been terminated may not apply more than twice for readmission to the university.
- 1.17.11 A postgraduate student whose studies have been terminated may apply for readmission to the university only once.

1.18 Readmission after interruption of studies

- 1.18.1 Where a student's study is interrupted for a year or longer for reasons other than those indicated in Rule 4.8 and Rule 5.8, such a student must apply for re-admission before or during the relevant registration period via the student portal and obtain the written permission of the executive dean concerned to be readmitted.
- 1.18.2 The executive dean concerned may set reasonable conditions for re-admission in accordance with Rule 1.18.1, and must officially capture such conditions on the student's record card, and report the conditions to the registrar.
- 1.18.3 Irrespective of the number of modules passed or failed during years of study before readmission, previous years of study for a specific programme contribute to the maximum duration of study for that programme.

1.19 Change of qualification or programme

- 1.19.1 A registered student may apply to the executive dean in the prescribed format via the student portal for a change of qualification or programme, provided that the student meets the admission and other requirements of the qualification or programme concerned.
- 1.19.2 The executive dean may refuse an application made in terms of Rule 1.19.1, and must communicate the reasons for refusal to the student and officially capture the decision on the student record card.

1.20 Change of delivery mode

For qualifications that are offered in both the contact and distance modes of delivery, a student whose performance complies with the progression requirements provided for in Rule 1.15, has one opportunity during the course of the enrolment period to apply to the executive dean via the student portal to change to another delivery mode.

1.21 Withdrawal of a qualification

The council may, with the concurrence of the senate, revoke a degree or withdraw a diploma or certificate where it is found in the course of a disciplinary hearing or administrative enquiry that the recipient committed plagiarism, theft, fraud, bribery or any other dishonest or unlawful act during the study concerned.

1.22 Qualifications awarded posthumously

Notwithstanding any other provision, senate may, on recommendation by an executive dean, award a degree, diploma or certificate posthumously if the student complied with all the requirements of the qualification concerned before passing away, or if the student has, in the opinion of senate, clearly proven that the final examinations or other assessments required for the completion of the qualification would in all likelihood have been passed by the deceased student.

2 Provisions for undergraduate qualifications

2.1 Structure of undergraduate qualifications

- 2.1.1 The **Higher Certificate** consists of a number of modules with a minimum total credit value of 120 at NQF level 5, structured according to the provisions of Rule 1.2.
- 2.1.2 The **Advanced Certificate** consists of a number of modules with a minimum total credit value of 120 at NQF level 6, structured according to the provisions of Rule 1.2.
- 2.1.3 In addition to other credits required in terms of Rule 1.2.4, a minimum of 120 credits at NQF level 6, structured according to the provisions of Rule 1.2 is required for a diploma, and a diploma takes the form of –
 - 2.1.3.1 a diploma with a minimum total credit value of 240 that leads to a professional designation or occupational role as determined by a professional body, and does not provide for work-integrated learning as part of the formal credits of the qualification structure, or
 - 2.1.3.2 a diploma with a minimum total credit value of 360 that may require up to 120 credits of work-integrated learning as part of the qualification structure.
- 2.1.4 The **Advanced Diploma** consists of a number of modules with a minimum total credit value of 120 at NQF level 7, structured according to the provisions of Rule 1.2.
- 2.1.5 The **360 credit general or professionally oriented Bachelor's Degree** consists of a number of modules with a minimum total credit value of 360 credits with a minimum of 120 credits at NQF level 7, structured according to the provisions of Rule 1.2.
- 2.1.6 The **480 credit general or professionally oriented Bachelor's Degree** consists of a number of modules with a minimum total credit value of 480 with a minimum of 120 credits either at NQF level 7 or NQF level 8, structured according to the provisions of Rule 1.2 and which –
 - 2.1.6.1 consists of a higher volume of learning and greater cognitive demand,
 - 2.1.6.2 aims at preparing students towards undertaking Master's study through a focus on building research capacity in the methodology and research techniques of the relevant discipline, and/or
 - 2.1.6.3 complies with the requirements set by statutory bodies concerned.

2.2 Credit accumulation and transfer

- 2.2.1 A student who was registered for, but did not complete an undergraduate qualification or programme at the university or at any other recognised higher education institution, may within the framework of the Senate rules on Teaching-Learning and Assessment apply for credit accumulation and transfer for equivalent courses or modules which have been successfully completed.
 - 2.2.1.1 Where the application is based on credits completed in an undergraduate qualification or programme at the university, the executive dean concerned may award any or all credits, including credits at the exit-level of the qualification or programme, as meeting part of the requirements for the qualification concerned, on condition that the outcomes of the modules concerned are equivalent.
 - 2.2.1.2 Where the application is based on credits completed in an undergraduate qualification or programme from another recognised higher education institution, the applicant must complete at least fifty percent (50%) of the credits in the programme, and all the exit-level modules, at the NWU.
- 2.2.2 A person who has obtained an undergraduate qualification from the university or from any other recognised higher education institution and applies for admission into a programme leading to another undergraduate qualification at the university, may apply to the executive dean concerned for credit recognition of equivalent courses or modules successfully completed, and the executive dean may grant recognition for a maximum of fifty percent (50%) of the credits obtained in the other undergraduate qualification or programme.
- 2.2.3 A person who has obtained credits from studies that lead to a part-qualification such as modules taken for non-degree purposes, whether at the university or from any other recognised higher education institution, may apply for credit transfer for equivalent courses or modules in a qualification or programme for which such person wishes to register, but a maximum of thirty percent (30%) of the credits in the programme may thus be transferred.

2.3 Additional modules

- 2.3.1 A student who registers for the first-year level of an undergraduate qualification or programme may apply to the executive dean concerned via the student portal to be allowed to register for one additional module per semester, be it an elective from the same qualification or programme or a module from another qualification or programme, provided that –
- 2.3.1.1 no class or examination timetable clashes are brought about thereby, and
 - 2.3.1.2 the maximum number of credits for which a student may register in a given academic year in terms of Rule 1.8 is not exceeded.
- 2.3.2 A student who registers for the second, third or fourth year level of an undergraduate qualification or programme, and who has already passed all the required preceding modules of the qualification or programme concerned, may apply via the student portal to be allowed to register for a maximum of two additional modules per semester or two additional year-modules, or one semester- and one year-module from the same qualification or programme or from another qualification or programme provided that –
- 2.3.2.1 no class or examination timetable clashes are brought about thereby, and
 - 2.3.2.2 the maximum number of credits for which a student may register in a given academic year in terms of Rule 1.8 is not exceeded.
- 2.3.3 An executive dean may grant a student who wishes to register for more additional modules than provided for in Rule 2.3.1 and Rule 2.3.2, to register for such additional modules subject to the limitations provided for in Rule 1.8.
- 2.3.4 A student who failed modules that form part of the formal curriculum of a qualification or programme may not in the following year of study register for additional modules, neither from the same qualification or programme, nor from another qualification or programme before the failed modules have been passed.

2.4 Registration for final year modules

- 2.4.1 Subject to applicable prescripts by statutory bodies and exceptions made in terms of Rule 2.4.2, a student may only register for final year modules of an undergraduate qualification or programme if the student has passed all the first-year core modules of the programme.
- 2.4.2 Faculty rules may allow for exceptions to the requirements of Rule 2.4.1 to be made by the executive dean concerned, taking into account the rules relating to the maximum duration of study provided for by Rule 1.13.

2.5 Concurrent registration for an undergraduate qualification and an honours degree or postgraduate diploma

Taking into consideration the provisions of Rule 1.8, the executive dean concerned may grant permission to a student who has no more than two modules outstanding for the completion of an undergraduate degree permission to register for an honours degree or postgraduate diploma.

2.6 Assessment of undergraduate modules

- 2.6.1 **Examiners for the traditional assessment practice or assessors for the continuous assessment practice, and moderators**
- 2.6.1.1 For every undergraduate module there is at least one internal examiner in the case of a traditional assessment module, or one assessor in the case of a continuous assessment module, and at least one internal moderator.
 - 2.6.1.2 Subject to applicable prescripts by statutory bodies, every exit-level undergraduate module is moderated externally by a person with the required qualifications, which for undergraduate qualifications must be at least one NQF level higher than the degree that is being moderated, provided that such a person may not be an employee or otherwise connected to the university by way of an extraordinary appointment.
 - 2.6.1.3 Faculty rules must specify whether only exit-level assessment results in a qualification or programme must be subjected to external moderation or whether other assessment components must also be moderated externally.

- 2.6.1.4 External moderators must be appointed for at least one, but not more than three consecutive years on the recommendation of the academic director or deputy dean concerned and approved by the faculty board.
- 2.6.1.5 An external moderator is required to comment on the validity of the assessment instruments, the quality of student performance and the standard of student achievement, the reliability of the marking process, and any concerns or irregularities regarding compliance with institutional and, where applicable, professional regulations.
- 2.6.1.6 Where a qualification or programme is offered in both the contact and distance modes of delivery, external moderation of its exit-level modules must be conducted every two years.
- 2.6.1.7 Regarding moderation of modules presented in the traditional assessment practice:
 - 2.6.1.7.1 An external moderator is required to mark at least ten percent (10%) of the examination scripts, files or folders for each paper written and to do additional random checks of at least twenty percent (20%) of examination scripts for each paper.
 - 2.6.1.7.2 Where less than fifty (50) students submitted examination scripts, files or folders, at least ten (10) scripts must be marked by the external moderator; and, in cases where less than ten (10) students submitted examination scripts, files or folders, all the examination pieces must be marked by the external moderator.
 - 2.6.1.7.3 Where a qualification or programme is offered in both the contact and distance modes of delivery, external moderation of its exit-level modules must be conducted at least every two years.
- 2.6.1.8 Regarding moderation of modules presented in the continuous assessment practice:
 - 2.6.1.8.1 The assessment plan for the module must be moderated externally before the semester in which it is to be taught.
 - 2.6.1.8.2 An external moderator is required to mark at least ten percent (10%) of the assessment that carried the highest weight or the assessment that contributed more than twenty percent (20%) of the final module mark.
 - 2.6.1.8.3 Where less than fifty (50) students submitted an assessment indicated in accordance with Rule 2.6.1.7.2, at least ten (10) scripts must be marked by the external moderator; and, in cases where less than ten (10) students submitted an assessment, all the assessments must be marked by the external moderator.
- 2.6.2 **Allocation of pass marks in a first semester first-year module**
 - 2.6.2.1 In the **traditional assessment practice** an executive dean may, notwithstanding the provisions of Rule 1.12.3.1, and in consultation with the academic director or deputy dean concerned, allocate a pass mark of fifty percent (50%) to a first-time entering undergraduate student in one first-year first-semester module where the student achieved a final module mark of no less than forty percent (40%) and an examination mark of at least 50%.
 - 2.6.2.2 In the **continuous-assessment practice** an executive dean may, notwithstanding the provisions of Rule 1.12.3.2 and in consultation with the academic director or deputy dean concerned, allocate a pass mark of 50% in only one first year first-semester module to a first-time entering undergraduate student where the student achieved a final module mark of no less than forty-five percent (45%) in respect to the relevant continuous-assessment opportunities.
- 2.6.3 **Number of examination opportunities in the traditional assessment practice**
 - 2.6.3.1 A student registered for an undergraduate module is entitled to use two consecutive opportunities per module to take the examination within the examination time-tables set in the annual university calendar
 - 2.6.3.2 Faculty rules may exclude specific modules from a second examination opportunity.
 - 2.6.3.3 A student may write the examination during either the first or the second examination opportunity, provided that all the examination papers for a module must be written during the same examination opportunity.
 - 2.6.3.4 A student who chooses to write the examination during the second examination opportunity may be liable to pay a prescribed fee.

- 2.6.3.5 A student who passes the examination in a module during the first examination opportunity and wishes to improve the module mark achieved may participate in the second examination opportunity, but the mark achieved in the second examination opportunity must be awarded as the final mark for the module even if it is lower than the mark achieved in the first opportunity.
- 2.6.3.6 A student who takes an examination for the first time during the second examination opportunity and fails is not entitled to an additional examination opportunity.
- 2.6.3.7 Where a student chooses to make use of the second examination opportunity after having failed the examination in a module during the first examination opportunity, the mark achieved in the second examination opportunity is used with the original participation mark where applicable for the calculation of the final module mark
- 2.6.4 **Number of assessment opportunities in the continuous assessment practice**
- 2.6.4.1 A student must submit at least eighty percent (80%) of the prescribed continuous -assessment tasks.
- 2.6.4.2 For each prescribed assessment task, the lecturer involved may, after providing feedback, allow the students a single opportunity to make a resubmission of the relevant task to demonstrate improved performance, in which case the marks obtained in the second submission are the final mark.

2.7 Attainment of an undergraduate qualification

2.7.1 Satisfaction of requirements

Taking into account the provisions of Rule 1.3.3, Rule 1.12, Rule 1.16 and Rule 1.18.3, an undergraduate qualification may be awarded when final verification and audit confirmation is given that a student has successfully completed all the modules prescribed in the applicable faculty yearbook for the qualification or programme concerned.

2.7.2 Qualification with distinction

- 2.7.2.1 In order to be awarded a qualification with distinction a student must achieve a weighted average of at least seventy-five percent (75%) for all the core modules identified as such in the relevant curriculum maps'
- 2.7.2.2 A full-time student enrolled in a contact qualification or programme must complete the qualification or programme within the minimum time specified in the faculty yearbook in order to qualify for the award of the qualification with distinction, except if failure to comply with the minimum time requirements is due to the interruption of the study on medical grounds, in which case the executive dean concerned may approve the award of the degree with distinction.
- 2.7.2.3 A part-time student or a student enrolled in a distance programme must complete the programme within the maximum time specified in Rule 1.13.2 to qualify for the award of the qualification with distinction.
- 2.7.2.4 The marks obtained in core modules completed at other institutions recognised by the university for the purpose must be taken into account when calculating the weighted average mark referred to in Rule 2.7.2.1.

3 Provisions for the bachelor honours degree and the postgraduate diploma

3.1 Structure of the bachelor honours degree and the postgraduate diploma

- 3.1.1 The bachelor honours degree and the postgraduate diploma each consists of a number of modules with a minimum total credit value of 120 at NQF level 8, structured according to the provisions of Rule 1.2.
- 3.1.2 Whereas the programme of a bachelor honours degree must include conducting and reporting research under supervision worth at least 30 credits, a postgraduate diploma does not have a formal research requirement, subject to faculty rules.

3.2 Credit accumulation and transfer

- 3.2.1 In the case of bachelor honours degrees, credit accumulation and transfer does not apply to the research component of a qualification or programme.
- 3.2.2 Credit accumulation and transfer must be based on modules or coursework components completed on an equivalent NQF level as the bachelor honours degree or the postgraduate diploma.

- 3.2.3 When applying for admission to register for a bachelor honours degree or a postgraduate diploma study, a prospective student may also apply to the executive dean concerned for recognition of completed equivalent coursework modules required for the qualification or programme for which the student wishes to seek admission.
- 3.2.4 If an application contemplated in Rule 3.2.3 is based on credits achieved in a programme offered by the university that the applicant has not completed, the executive dean concerned may, within the framework of the Senate-approved Rules on Teaching-Learning and Assessment, grant any or all credits as applied for to satisfy part of the requirements of the qualification or programme concerned.
- 3.2.5 If an application contemplated in Rule 3.2.3 is not based on credits achieved in a qualification or programme offered by the university that the prospective student has not completed, the recognition of credits is subject to the condition that the student completes fifty percent (50%) of the coursework modules of the qualification or programme at the university.

3.3 Additional modules

A student who registers for a bachelor honours degree or a postgraduate diploma may apply to the executive dean via the student portal to be allowed to register for additional modules from the same qualification or programme or from another qualification or programme, provided that –

- 3.3.1 no timetable clashes are brought about thereby, and
- 3.3.2 the maximum number of credits for which a student may register in a given academic year as provided for in Rule 1.8. is not exceeded.

3.4 Concurrent registration for an undergraduate qualification and an honours degree or postgraduate diploma

Taking into consideration the provisions of Rule 1.9.6 and Rule 2.5, a student who received permission for concurrent registration for an undergraduate degree and an honours degree or postgraduate diploma may not be awarded the honours degree or postgraduate diploma before all the requirements for the attainment of the relevant undergraduate qualification have been met.

3.5 Assessment

3.5.1 Examiners, assessors and moderators

- 3.5.1.1 For every module in an honours degree or postgraduate diploma there must be at least one internal examiner or assessor and at least one internal moderator.
- 3.5.1.2 Every module is moderated externally at least every year by a person with the required qualifications, which should be at least at NQF level 9, provided that such a person may not be a staff member or otherwise connected to the university by way of an extraordinary appointment.
- 3.5.1.3 Faculty rules must specify whether only the final assessment results (regardless of the assessment practice) in a qualification or programme must be subjected to external moderation or whether other summative assessment components must also be moderated externally.
- 3.5.1.4 External moderators must be appointed for at least one, but not more than three consecutive years on the recommendation of the academic director or deputy dean concerned and approved by the faculty board.
- 3.5.1.5 An external moderator is required to comment on the validity of the assessment instruments, the quality of student performance and the standard of student achievement, the reliability of the marking process, and any concerns or irregularities regarding compliance with institutional and, where applicable, professional regulations.
- 3.5.1.6 The supervisor of a bachelor honours research component of the qualification or programme may not be appointed as an internal examiner of such component.
- 3.5.1.7 Regarding moderation in respect of modules presented in the traditional assessment practice:
 - 3.5.1.7.1 An external moderator is required to mark at least ten percent (10%) of the examination scripts for each paper written and to do random checks of at least twenty percent (20%) of examination scripts for each paper.

- 3.5.1.7.2 Where less than fifty (50) students submitted examination scripts, folders or files indicated in Rule 3.5.1.2, at least ten (10) must be marked by the external moderator, and, in cases where less than ten (10) students submitted examination scripts, folders or files, all the examination scripts must be marked by the external moderator.
- 3.5.1.8 Regarding moderation of modules presented in the continuous-assessment practice:
 - 3.5.1.8.1 The assessment plan for a module must be moderated externally.
 - 3.5.1.8.2 An external moderator is required to mark at least ten percent (10%) of the assessment that carried the highest weight or the assessment that contributed more than twenty percent (20%) of the final module mark.
 - 3.5.1.8.3 Where less than fifty (50) students submitted an assessment indicated in Rule 3.5.1.2, at least ten (10) scripts must be marked by the external moderator; and, in cases where less than ten (10) students submitted an assessment, all the assessments must be marked by the external moderator.

3.5.2 **Number of assessment opportunities in the traditional assessment practice**

- 3.5.2.1 The executive dean concerned may grant a student who failed modules of an honours degree or a postgraduate diploma programme a second examination opportunity, provided that a participation or module mark of at least forty percent (40%), whichever is applicable in accordance with either Rule 1.12.2.1 or Rule 1.12.2.3, was obtained in the relevant module.
- 3.5.2.2 The executive dean concerned may grant a student who, in the course of the maximum period allowed for the study, second examination opportunities for reasons different from that contemplated in Rule 3.5.2.1.

3.5.3 **Number of assessment opportunities in the continuous assessment practice**

- 3.5.3.1 A student must submit at least eighty percent (80%) of the prescribed continuous assessment tasks to obtain a module mark.
- 3.5.3.2 For each prescribed assessment task, the lecturer involved may, after providing feedback, allow a student a single opportunity to make a resubmission of the relevant task to demonstrate improved performance, in which case the marks obtained in the second submission are the final mark.

3.6 **Attainment of the degree**

3.6.1 **Satisfaction of requirements**

Taking into account the conditions of Rule 1.3.3, Rule 1.12, Rule 1.16 and Rule 1.18.3, a bachelor honours degree or postgraduate diploma may be awarded when final verification and audit confirmation is given that a student has successfully completed all the modules prescribed in the applicable faculty yearbook for the qualification or programme concerned.

3.6.2 **Qualification with distinction**

- 3.6.2.1 In order to be awarded a bachelor honours degree or postgraduate diploma with distinction, a student must achieve a weighted average of at least seventy-five percent (75%) for all the core modules identified as such in the curriculum map concerned.
- 3.6.2.2 A full-time student enrolled in a contact qualification or programme must complete the qualification or programme within the minimum time specified in the faculty yearbook in order to qualify for the award of the qualification with distinction, except if failure to comply with the minimum time requirements is due to the interruption of the study on medical grounds, in which case the executive dean concerned may approve the award of the degree with distinction.
- 3.6.2.3 A part-time student or a student enrolled in a distance qualification or programme must complete the qualification programme within the maximum time specified in Rule 1.13.2 to qualify for the award of the qualification with distinction.
- 3.6.2.4 The marks obtained in core modules completed at other institutions recognised by the university for the purpose must be taken into account when calculating the weighted average mark referred to in Rule 3.6.2.1.

4 Provisions for general and professional master's degrees

4.1 Manual for Higher Degree Studies

Subject to the provisions of these rules, the Manual for Higher Degree Studies, as approved and amended from time to time by the senate, regulates matters relating to the preparation for, progress, guidance, completion and termination of study towards a master's degree.

4.2 Purpose and structure of general and professional master's degrees

- 4.2.1 Whereas a general master's degree aims at educating and training researchers who can contribute to the development of knowledge at an advanced level, the professional master's degree aims at educating and training graduates for advanced and specialised professional employment with the ability to contribute to the development of knowledge at an advanced level.
- 4.2.2 Unless otherwise provided for in faculty rules due to statutory and professional body requirements, general and professional master's degrees consist of a total number of 180 credits.
- 4.2.3 The university may offer a general master's degree in the form of –
 - 4.2.3.1 a **research master's degree by dissertation** with a minimum of 180 credits for research;
 - 4.2.3.2 a **master's degree by coursework and a dissertation** with a minimum of 100 and a maximum of 135 credits for research, and
 - 4.2.3.3 a **master's degree by coursework and a mini dissertation** with a minimum of 60 and a maximum of 99 credits for research.
- 4.2.4 A **professional master's degree** offered by the university must include an independent research component that comprises, as provided for in the applicable faculty rules, at least 45 credits consisting of either a single research or technical project or a series of smaller projects demonstrating innovation or professional expertise.

4.3 Requirements for a master's degree

- 4.3.1 Subject to additional requirements that may be provided for in faculty rules, the components of a general master's degree are –
 - 4.3.1.1 for a research master's degree by dissertation, a written dissertation or equivalent research product as provided for in Rule 4.2.3.1 and Rule 4.4;
 - 4.3.1.2 for a master's degree by coursework and dissertation, coursework modules for which formative and summative assessments are required, and a dissertation or equivalent research product as provided for in Rule 4.2.3.2 and Rule 4.4, and
 - 4.3.1.3 for a master's degree by coursework and a mini dissertation, coursework modules for which formative and summative assessments are required, and a mini dissertation, or equivalent research product as provided for in Rule 4.2.3.3 and Rule 4.4.
- 4.3.2 Subject to the requirements provided for in faculty rules and in Rule 4.2.4, the components of a professional master's degree are coursework modules for which formative and summative assessments are required, and an independent research component in the form of a single research or technical project or a series of research or technical projects, including a research article or a published or granted patent, or any of the forms of creative output provided for in Rule 4.4.4.
- 4.3.3 Faculty rules may require a master's degree student to submit a research article to an accredited scholarly journal to qualify for the award of the degree.
- 4.3.4 Where coursework modules are required in a master's degree programme, those modules must, subject to exceptions provided for in faculty rules, be completed before the research component may be submitted for examination.

4.4 Requirements for the research component of a master's degree

- 4.4.1 Subject to the exceptions provided for in Rule 4.4.2 and Rule 4.4.3, the requirements for the research component of a master's degree are the successful submission and examination of a written dissertation, mini dissertation, or one or more research reports or projects in the case of a professional master's degree.

- 4.4.2 Faculty rules may provide that full or partial compliance with the research component of a master's degree may take the form of one or more publishable or published research articles in a specified field, taking into account the requirements of Rule 4.13 and Rule 4.14 and specifying the minimum number of research articles required in lieu of a dissertation, a mini dissertation, or the research component of a professional master's degree.
- 4.4.3 Faculty rules may provide that full or partial compliance with the research component of a master's degree may include published patents or granted patents in a relevant field subject to the provisions of Rule 4.14.3 and Rule 4.14.4.
- 4.4.4 Faculty rules may provide that the requirements for the research component of specified master's degree programmes may be met, either partially or in full, by –
 - 4.4.4.1 the performance of a series of concerts;
 - 4.4.4.2 the compilation of a portfolio of creative works consisting of artefacts, artworks, designs or compositions, or
 - 4.4.4.3 the presentation of a professional exhibition consisting of a set of original artworks, artefacts, installations or conceptualizations.

4.5 Credit accumulation and transfer

- 4.5.1 Credit accumulation and transfer does not apply to the research component of a master's degree programme.
- 4.5.2 Credit accumulation and transfer must be based on modules or coursework components completed on an equivalent NQF level as the master's degree.
- 4.5.3 When applying for admission to register for a master's degree study, a prospective student may apply to the executive dean concerned for recognition of completed equivalent coursework modules required for the master's degree programme for which the student wishes to register.
- 4.5.4 If an application contemplated in Rule 4.5.3 is based on credits achieved in a qualification or programme offered by the university that the prospective student has not completed, the executive dean concerned may, within the framework of the Senate-approved Rules on Teaching-Learning and Assessment grant any or all credits as applied for to satisfy part of the requirements of the qualification or programme concerned.
- 4.5.5 If an application contemplated in Rule 4.5.3 is not based on credits achieved in a qualification or programme offered by the university that the prospective student has not completed, the recognition of credits is subject to the condition that the student completes fifty percent (50%) of the coursework modules of the qualification or programme at the university.

4.6 Additional coursework modules

A student who registers for a master's degree may apply to the executive dean via the student portal to be allowed to register for additional modules besides those required for the curriculum of the qualification or programme concerned, subject to the following conditions:

- 4.6.1 no timetable clashes are brought about thereby, and
- 4.6.2 the maximum number of credits for which a student may register in a given academic year as provided for in Rule 1.8. is not exceeded.

4.7 Registration

- 4.7.1 A student who does not register on or before the required registration date determined for that purpose in the annual university calendar may, in the same calendar year, apply to the executive dean concerned for late registration for which the payment of a penalty may be prescribed by the registrar.
- 4.7.2 A student who does not register in a particular year, but wishes to continue the study in the subsequent year, must apply for readmission to the executive dean concerned in accordance with Rule 1.18.
- 4.7.3 The executive dean concerned may set reasonable conditions for late registration or readmission in a subsequent year.

- 4.7.4 If, in any year, a master's degree student fails to re-register on or before the required registration date determined for that purpose in the annual university calendar, the academic director or deputy dean concerned may assign the topic of the planned research, if already registered, to another student in the same research entity.
- 4.7.5 Re-registration for coursework modules
- 4.7.6 A student may, in the course of the maximum period allowed for the study, repeat coursework modules constituting not more than twenty-five percent (25%) of the total credits of the coursework component of a master's degree programme.

4.8 Leave of absence

- 4.8.1 A registered master's degree student who motivates the reasons for not continuing with studies in a particular year may apply to the executive dean via the student portal for leave of absence for the relevant year.
- 4.8.2 Leave of absence may only be granted for one year in the course of a student's enrolment.
- 4.8.3 A student who is granted leave of absence remains liable for the paying the registration fees for the period of absence.
- 4.8.4 A student who has been granted leave of absence does not have access to any campus and on-line facilities of the university.
- 4.8.5 The rules relating to the maximum duration of study provided for in Rule 1.13 continue to apply despite the granting of leave of absence.
- 4.8.6 The university retains the right to cancel the studies of a student who does not register in the year following the period of approved absence.
- 4.8.7 The granting of leave of absence to an international student is subject to the full payment in advance of the registration fees for the year of absence.

4.9 Exemption from registration

- 4.9.1 Where a master's degree student is required to make minor changes to an examined dissertation, mini dissertation or research report with an outcome in accordance with Rule 4.18.5.1.2, such student does not have to register for a new academic year, provided that the required changes are made satisfactorily by the middle of February of the year concerned or, if the registrar so directs, before the closure of the graduation list, and then the degree may be awarded at the autumn graduation ceremony of that year.
- 4.9.2 A master's degree student who has passed all coursework modules required for the completion of a programme leading to a master's qualification but one, may qualify for an additional final assessment opportunity in the outstanding module in accordance with Rule 1.12.7.1 or Rule 1.12.7.2, whichever is applicable.

4.10 Supervision

- 4.10.1 A master's degree study must be registered within the academic scope of either a research entity or a school.
- 4.10.2 A student admitted to a master's degree programme works under the supervision of a supervisor appointed, subject to the approval of the faculty board concerned, by the academic director or deputy dean concerned.
- 4.10.3 To act as supervisor or co-supervisor of the research component of a master's degree, the supervisor and co-supervisor must at least be in possession of a master's degree in a cognate field of study.
- 4.10.4 A faculty board may in exceptional circumstances approve the appointment of a co-supervisor on the grounds of relevant technical expertise despite such a person not being in possession of a master's degree.
- 4.10.5 A master's degree student may, before submitting a research product for examination, raise dissatisfaction with any aspect of the guidance provided by a supervisor or co-supervisors in writing to the executive dean concerned, who must respond in writing to the student before the research product is submitted for examination.

4.11 Research proposal and title registration

- 4.11.1 A student enrolled for a research master's degree by dissertation must, within twelve months after the final date of registration for master's degrees determined in the annual university calendar, submit a research proposal and proposed title for the dissertation for approval and registration by a body designated for the purpose.
- 4.11.2 A student enrolled for a master's degree by coursework must, in consultation with a possible supervisor and no longer than six months after the completion of the last required module assessment of the degree, submit a research proposal and proposed title for the required research project for approval and registration by a body designated for the purpose.
- 4.11.3 A student enrolled for a professional master's degree which requires a single research project, must, in consultation with a possible supervisor and within twelve months after the completion of the last required module assessment of the degree, submit a research proposal and proposed title for the research project for approval and registration by a body designated for the purpose.
- 4.11.4 Every research proposal is subject to ethical clearance, and confirmation must be submitted to the faculty higher degrees committee.
- 4.11.5 The university may terminate a student's registration if the required research proposal is not submitted for approval in time.

4.12 Submission of the research product of a master's degree for examination

- 4.12.1 A student registered for a master's degree must, with the written consent of the supervisor concerned, submit the dissertation, mini dissertation, research report or other research product contemplated in Rule 4.4 for examination on or before the date determined for submission in the annual university calendar in order to qualify for graduation at the appointed graduation ceremony.
- 4.12.2 Where the supervisor withholds permission for the submission of a research product for examination, the academic director or deputy dean concerned must, after consultation with the supervisor and the student, make a recommendation to the executive dean on the readiness of the research product for submission for examination.
- 4.12.3 The research product of a master's degree study must comply with the technical requirements provided for in the Manual for Higher Degree Studies.

4.13 Research articles submitted as research product

- 4.13.1 Where faculty rules require that a research article must be submitted to an accredited scholarly journal as part of the requirements for the degree, the candidate must provide evidence of such submission.
- 4.13.2 Where a candidate is allowed to submit the research product in the form of a research article or articles, such research product must be presented for examination purposes as an integrated unit, supplemented with a problem statement, an introduction and a synoptic conclusion, and the manuscript submission guidelines, or the URL link to the manuscript guidelines, of the journal or journals concerned.
- 4.13.3 Where any research article to which the candidate for a master's degree and other authors have contributed is submitted as the research product of a master's degree programme, the candidate must obtain a written statement from each co-author in which it is stated that such co-author grants permission for the research product to be used for the stated purpose, and in which it is further indicated what each co-author's academic contribution to the research product concerned had been.

4.14 Performing arts, visual arts or a patent submitted as examination requirement

- 4.14.1 Where a candidate for a master's degree in the performing arts performed an approved concert programme, the candidate must also submit a manuscript that complies with the requirements for a research report at master's degree level, together with a digital sound or video recording of the concert in a previously approved format.
- 4.14.2 Where a candidate for a master's degree in the visual or tactile arts held an approved exhibition, the exhibition must be assembled and a manuscript must be submitted that complies with the requirements for a research report at master's degree level, together with a series of photographs of the works in the exhibition in an approved format.

- 4.14.3 Where any published patent application or granted patent is submitted as the research product of a master's degree programme to which the candidate for a master's degree and other inventors have contributed, the candidate must obtain a written statement from the NWU Technology Transfer and Innovation Support Department containing the written permission of co-inventors granting permission for the research product to be used for the stated purpose.
- 4.14.4 Where co-inventors as contemplated in Rule 4.14.3 were involved in the development of the research product, the candidate must mention this fact in the preface, and must include the statement of NWU Technology Transfer and Innovation Support Department immediately following the preface to the research product.
- 4.14.5 The higher degrees administration must make an electronic copy of the research product of a candidate for a master's degree available for inspection by the university community for a period of at least 14 calendar days after it was dispatched to the examiners, and notice of such availability must be given in a suitable manner.

4.15 Withdrawal of a research product after submission for examination

After its submission for examination a research product may not be withdrawn.

4.16 Classification of a research product as confidential

The university's rules regarding the classification of the research product as confidential must be taken into account in the process of examination of the research product of a master's degree.

4.17 Concurrent registration for an honours degree or a postgraduate diploma and a master's degree

Taking into consideration the relevant provisions of Rule 1.9.6 and Rule 3.4 a student who received permission for concurrent registration in an honours degree or a postgraduate diploma and a master's degree may not be awarded the master's degree before all the requirements for the attainment of the relevant honours-degree or postgraduate diploma have been met.

4.18 Examination

4.18.1 Appointment of examiners for the research component of a master's degree

- 4.18.1.1 The executive dean concerned must appoint, with the approval of the relevant faculty-board committee concerned, at least two examiners, of which at least one must be an external examiner, for the examination of the research product of every master's degree study.
- 4.18.1.2 The name of an examiner appointed in accordance with Rule 4.18.1.1 is not made known to the candidate before or during the examination, and after the examination only with the permission of the examiner concerned.
- 4.18.1.3 A person who was involved in any manner in the supervision of a master's degree student may not be appointed as an examiner.

4.18.2 Examination and moderation

- 4.18.2.1 The examination of a coursework module of a master's degree is moderated externally unless the module is examined externally.
- 4.18.2.2 Every coursework module is moderated externally every year by a person with the required qualifications, which should be at least at NQF level 9, provided that such a person may not be an employee or otherwise connected to the university by way of an extraordinary appointment.
- 4.18.2.3 Faculty rules must specify for every master's degree programme whether only the examination materials or additional summative assessment components must be submitted for external moderation.
- 4.18.2.4 External moderators must be appointed for at least one, but not more than three consecutive years on the recommendation of the academic director or deputy dean concerned and approved by the faculty board.
- 4.18.2.5 An external moderator is required to mark at least ten percent of the examination scripts for each paper written and to do random checks of at least twenty percent of examination scripts for each paper.

- 4.18.2.6 Where less than fifty students submitted examination scripts, at least ten scripts must be marked by the external moderator, and, in cases where less than ten students submitted examination scripts, all the examination scripts must be marked by the external moderator.
- 4.18.2.7 An external moderator is required to comment on the validity of the assessment instruments, the quality of student performance and the standard of student attainment, the reliability of the marking process, and any concerns or irregularities with respect to the observation of institutional and, where applicable, professional regulations.
- 4.18.2.8 The examiners of a research product of a master's degree study are required to provide an assessment of the question whether the research product contains proof of the candidate's ability to conduct independent research in the field of study concerned, and to report such research results satisfactorily.
- 4.18.2.9 Every examiner submits a separate written report on the research product to the appropriate administrative component of the faculty concerned, to be forwarded for processing and finalisation by the faculty committee concerned.
- 4.18.2.10 A supervisor or co-supervisor of a master's degree student does not communicate or negotiate with an examiner on any issue relating to the examination of the student's research product.
- 4.18.2.11 The faculty higher degrees committee or other faculty structure responsible for the approval of the research component of master's degrees considers all examination reports relating to the research product of a master's degree study for recommendation to, and the final approval by the faculty board concerned, of the assessment outcome.
- 4.18.2.12 Subject to the provisions of Rule 4.18.8.3, the unanimous finding of the examiners that a master's degree student passes an examination is final.

4.18.3 Second examination opportunity in coursework modules

The executive dean concerned may, after consultation with the academic director or deputy dean concerned, grant a student who failed an examination in a coursework module of a master's degree programme a second examination or assessment opportunity.

4.18.4 Requirements for passing a coursework module

- 4.18.4.1 Notwithstanding the provisions of Rule 1.12.3.1.2 and Rule 1.12.3.2.1 (whichever is applicable), faculty rules may require a final module mark higher than fifty percent (50%) to pass a coursework module in a master's degree programme.
- 4.18.4.2 Notwithstanding the provisions of Rule 1.12.3.1, where an examination mark forms part of the final module mark, a subminimum of fifty percent (50%) must be obtained in the examination, and faculty rules may provide that a subminimum of more than fifty percent (50%) is required.

4.18.5 Recommendations relating to the examination of the research product in a master's degree programme

- 4.18.5.1 An examiner may recommend that a research product –
 - 4.18.5.1.1 be accepted unconditionally;
 - 4.18.5.1.2 be accepted on condition that specified revisions be made to the satisfaction of the supervisor;
 - 4.18.5.1.3 be accepted on condition that specified revisions of a substantive nature be made to the satisfaction of the academic director or deputy dean concerned;
 - 4.18.5.1.4 be accepted on condition that specified revisions of a substantive nature be made to the satisfaction of the examiners concerned;
 - 4.18.5.1.5 not be accepted in its current format, in which case it is referred back to the candidate for revision, elaboration or amendment and resubmission for re-examination, or
 - 4.18.5.1.6 not be accepted at all, in which case the candidate fails.
- 4.18.5.2 All comments received from the university community as contemplated in Rule 4.14.5 must be submitted to the executive dean concerned before expiry of the period for which a research product is made available for inspection, who must forward such comments to the faculty higher degrees committee or other faculty structure concerned for evaluation together with the examiners' reports.

4.18.6 Passing the research component of a master's degree with distinction

- 4.18.6.1 A dissertation, mini dissertation, research report or other research product is passed with distinction if the examiners award an average mark of at least seventy-five percent (75%).
- 4.18.6.2 If the examiners refer a research product back as contemplated in Rule 4.18.5.1.5, the final mark awarded may not exceed seventy percent (70%).

4.18.7 Revisions to and re-examination of the research product of a master's degree

- 4.18.7.1 The supervisor of a research product must, within 14 calendar days after receipt of all the examiners' reports and in consultation with the academic director or deputy dean concerned, provide the candidate with a memorandum setting out the nature and extent of the revision or elaboration required as contemplated in Rule 4.18.5.1.2, Rule 4.18.5.1.3, Rule 4.18.5.1.4 and Rule 4.18.5.1.5.
- 4.18.7.2 In order to be recorded as a graduate in the academic year during which the research product was submitted for examination, a revised, amended or elaborated research product must be submitted before or on the submission date determined for that purpose in the annual university calendar of the year concerned.
- 4.18.7.3 Where a candidate is required to revise or elaborate a research product, the revised product must be submitted within one year after receipt by the candidate of the result as contemplated in Rule 4.18.7.1, but, if the candidate provides valid grounds in an application, the executive dean concerned may grant an extension.
- 4.18.7.4 A research product that has been revised in accordance with an outcome in terms of Rule 4.18.5.1.5 may be referred back to a candidate only once and, after revision, be submitted once for re-examination.
- 4.18.7.5 The examiners who were appointed for the original examination are deemed also to have been appointed for the re-examination, but if considered necessary or expedient, other or additional examiners may be appointed.

4.18.8 Vagueness or differences regarding examination results

- 4.18.8.1 Where, in the case of a coursework module, the examiners or moderators are not unanimous about whether a student should pass a module, or pass a module with distinction, or where, in the case of a research product, the comments received by members of the university community in accordance with Rule 4.14.5 differ materially from the recommendations of the examiners, the executive dean concerned must follow the procedure provided for in Rule 4.18.8.3 before taking the final decision regarding the outcome.
- 4.18.8.2 A material difference regarding the examination of a research product as concluded in accordance with Rule 4.18.8.1 is deemed to exist if –
 - 4.18.8.2.1 the reports of the examiners differ on the question whether the research product may be accepted, with or without revisions, should be referred back for revision, or should be rejected;
 - 4.18.8.2.2 the marks awarded by the examiners differ by more than fifteen percent (15%), or
 - 4.18.8.2.3 comments that arise from the release of the research product for inspection by the university community in accordance with Rule 4.14.5 differ materially from the recommendations of the examiners.
- 4.18.8.3 Where differences in the nature contemplated in Rule 4.18.8.1 occur, the executive dean may, in consultation with the academic director or deputy dean concerned, seek clarification from the examiners or members of the university community who have submitted comments on the research product regarding anything that is not clear in their reports or comments relating to a coursework module or research product.
- 4.18.8.4 The executive dean concerned must take steps to resolve the outcome of an examination where a material difference arises as contemplated in Rule 4.18.8.2, which may include –
 - 4.18.8.4.1 inviting a knowledgeable external expert to advise the faculty higher degrees committee or similar structure;
 - 4.18.8.4.2 the appointment of an additional external examiner to assess the research product in accordance with Rule 4.15.1, and to award a mark that will be included in the calculation towards the finalisation of the assessment result, or

- 4.18.8.4.3 the appointment of an independent arbitrator whose role is confined to considering the research report, as well as the examiners' reports, and to make a recommendation regarding the assessment result, excluding the award of a mark.
- 4.18.8.5 The faculty board concerned approves the final outcome of an examination after consideration of the recommendation of the faculty higher degrees committee or similar structure on the assessment result based on the outcome of the steps taken by the executive dean in accordance with Rule 4.18.8.4, and, if the faculty board is unable to resolve the matter, the executive dean must take a final decision.

4.18.9 Dispute resolution

- 4.18.9.1 A master's degree student who raises a substantive objection to the manner in which the examination of a research product was conducted, may declare, by means of a written notice lodged with the registrar within 14 days after communication to the student of the final decision regarding the assessment outcome, a dispute with the university.
- 4.18.9.2 Within ten days of receiving the declaration of a dispute as contemplated in Rule 4.18.9.1, the registrar must obtain clarification from the executive dean concerned whether the objection raised by the student is justified or not, cause remedial steps to be taken if necessary, and respond to the complainant accordingly.
- 4.18.9.3 If the complainant is not satisfied with the response of the registrar contemplated in Rule 4.18.9.2, the registrar must convene a panel consisting of at least two executive deans not previously involved in the matter to adjudicate the dispute within fourteen working days.
- 4.18.9.4 The findings of the panel established in accordance with Rule 4.18.9.3 may be that –
 - 4.18.9.4.1 the correct procedures were followed and that the dispute has no merit;
 - 4.18.9.4.2 the matter is referred back to the executive dean concerned to ensure that procedural shortcomings or errors that were found are corrected;
 - 4.18.9.4.3 the matter should be referred to an alternative dispute resolution process, or
 - 4.18.9.4.4 the matter be referred for arbitration.
- 4.18.9.5 If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome contemplated in Rule 4.18.9.4.1 or Rule 4.18.9.4.2, or the panel finds that the matter should be dealt with by means of an alternative dispute resolution process in accordance with Rule 4.18.9.4.3 and the complainant agrees, the registrar must cause a panel of at least three persons expert in the field concerned or with wide experience in postgraduate examination to be appointed with notice to the complainant to investigate the complaint and make recommendations for its resolution.
- 4.18.9.6 If the panel refers the matter for arbitration in accordance with Rule 4.18.9.4.4, the executive dean concerned and the complainant must each, within three weeks, submit to the registrar the names and details of no more than three persons to be appointed as arbitrator or arbitration panel, all arbitrators being expert in the field concerned or with the wide experience in postgraduate examination, and the complainant must agree in writing to bear or share the costs of the arbitration if such is the outcome as contemplated in Rule 4.18.9.8.
- 4.18.9.7 An arbitrator appointed in accordance with Rule 4.18.9.6 must be informed or be prepared to become informed about the arbitration procedures contained in the latest edition of the Rules for the Conduct of Arbitrations of the Association of Arbitrators (Southern Africa) and to apply these rules for the purposes of settling the dispute.
- 4.18.9.8 The outcome of an arbitration process may include an award for specific performance, an interdict, damages, a fine, a cost order, including costs regarding legal representation on an attorney-client scale or any other order the arbiter or arbitration panel considers to be appropriate in the circumstances.

4.19 Intellectual property in and publication of research products

- 4.19.1 All intellectual property that may be created in the course of a master's degree study is governed by the Intellectual Property Policy of the NWU.
- 4.19.2 The university is entitled to physically or electronically multiply and distribute or make available any research product submitted in its final form by a master's degree candidate.

- 4.19.3 A master's degree graduate is required to undertake the publication of the results of the study within six months of conferral of the degree, but the university may, if the graduate does not do so, undertake publication after notification of its intention to do so.
- 4.19.4 Publication by the university as contemplated in Rule 4.19.3 may be undertaken without the written permission of the graduate, but the name of the graduate concerned must be acknowledged as the first author, except where substantial processing of the text is undertaken by another person, or if the graduate expresses the wish in writing not so to be cited.
- 4.19.5 A master's degree student who is in terms of these rules required to, or otherwise wishes to submit a publication based on a research product of the study, must obtain the advice of the supervisor concerned regarding the scholarly quality of the research product, the selection of a suitable publication or publication medium, possible considerations of confidential classification, and the requirements and implications of Rule 4.19.7 and Rule 4.19.8.
- 4.19.6 The supervisor concerned must record compliance with Rule 4.19.5 in the report contemplated in Rule 1.14.4.
- 4.19.7 In a publication referred to in Rule 4.19.5, the supervisor or supervisors must be cited.
- 4.19.8 A master's degree graduate is deemed to be the sole author of a research product of the study unless another person, including the supervisor, makes a substantial contribution to the production of the publication, as distinguished from the supervised research product, to warrant co-authorship taking the conventions of the discipline concerned into account, or where another person takes the primary responsibility for the writing of the publication to the extent that it justifies the first authorship of such other person.

4.20 Embargo period for a completed dissertation in regard of which the degree had been conferred

- 4.20.1 A master's graduate may request the Chief Director Library Services via the relevant library portal for an embargo period of up to two years for the publication of the research product on the NWU repository, Boloka.
- 4.20.2 In all instances, master's degree graduates must adhere to the publication schedules of external research sponsors such as the NRF.

4.21 Conversion of master's degree study to doctoral study during study period

- 4.21.1 The supervisor of a research master's degree candidate may, with the concurrence of the candidate, submit a comprehensive motivation to the executive dean concerned for the conversion of the study to a study for a general doctoral degree.
- 4.21.2 The executive dean must obtain the advice of an assessment panel consisting of at least one external disciplinary expert, the academic director or deputy dean concerned, and at least one full professor in the faculty concerned, for submission to the relevant faculty board.
- 4.21.3 Consideration by the relevant faculty board of the conversion of a master's degree study to a doctoral study must be informed by a demonstrated significant change in the scope of the research project and its potential impact on knowledge production in the field of enquiry and can only be granted –
 - 4.21.3.1 before the research product of the master's degree study is submitted for examination;
 - 4.21.3.2 if the student has completed at least one year of registration for the master's degree;
 - 4.21.3.3 if the intended study complies with all the rules and requirements of these rules regarding a doctoral degree, and
 - 4.21.3.4 if the candidate registers for at least one additional year as a doctoral candidate.
- 4.21.4 Before any formal assessment of the research product of a study converted from master's to the doctoral level takes place, the candidate concerned may submit a written and motivated request to the executive dean to revert the study back to the master's level.
- 4.21.5 Approval of a request contemplated in Rule 4.21.4 must be supported by the supervisor and the academic director or deputy dean concerned.

4.22 Conversion of a master's study as a result of the examination process

- 4.22.1 In exceptional instances where all examiners of a research-master's study research piece find that the potential impact on knowledge production in the field of enquiry may contribute to the development of knowledge at the most advanced level, the higher-degree committee of the relevant faculty may motivate the conversion of the relevant study to a doctoral study to the faculty board.
- 4.22.2 The executive dean must obtain the advice on the proposed conversion of an assessment panel consisting of at least one external expert in the field, the academic director or deputy dean concerned, and at least one full professor in the faculty concerned before submission to the faculty board.
- 4.22.3 The supervisor and student must be informed of the outcome of the examination process, the recommendation of all examiners and that of the assessment panel, and must consent thereto that –
 - 4.22.3.1 a master's degree will not be conferred;
 - 4.22.3.2 the full requirements for doctoral studies as contemplated in the relevant sub-paragraphs of Rule 5 must be adhered to, and
 - 4.22.3.3 the student will register for doctoral studies for a minimum period of one year.

4.23 Extension of the study period

- 4.23.1 An application for extension of the study period by a master's degree candidate submitted via the student portal must be supported by a recommendation by the academic director or deputy dean concerned.
- 4.23.2 An application for extension of the period of study for a master's degree must indicate–
 - 4.23.2.1 that the research topic is still relevant;
 - 4.23.2.2 what progress has been made by the applicant;
 - 4.23.2.3 what remains to be done to complete the study;
 - 4.23.2.4 what the time schedule for completion is, and
 - 4.23.2.5 whether the supervisor is still available.
- 4.23.3 The grant of an extension for the study contemplated in this rule is subject to the payment of a levy determined by the registrar.

4.24 Attainment of the degree

4.24.1 Satisfaction of requirements

Taking into account Rule 1.3.3, Rule 1.13, Rule 1.16, Rule 1.18.3 and Rule 4.2, a master's degree may be awarded when final verification and audit confirmation is given that a student has satisfied the requirements provided for in Rule 4.3 and Rule 4.4.

4.24.2 Attainment of the qualification with distinction

- 4.24.2.1 A master's degree by research is awarded with distinction where an average mark of seventy-five percent (75%) is obtained for the research product contemplated in Rule 4.4.
- 4.24.2.2 A master's degree by coursework is awarded with distinction where a weighted average of seventy-five percent (75%) is obtained for the coursework modules and the research component.
- 4.24.2.3 A professional master's degree is passed with distinction where a weighted average of seventy-five percent (75%) is obtained for all the modules prescribed in faculty rules.

5 Provisions for research and professional doctoral degrees

5.1 Manual for Higher Degree Studies

Subject to the provisions of these rules, the Manual for Higher Degree Studies, as approved and amended from time to time by the senate, regulates matters relating to the preparation for, progress, guidance, completion and termination of study towards a doctoral degree.

5.2 Directives for research and professional doctoral studies

- 5.2.1 Whereas a doctoral degree by research must be aimed at educating and training researchers who can contribute to the development of knowledge at the most advanced level, the professional doctoral degree must be aimed at educating and training graduates for advanced and specialised professional employment with the ability to contribute to the development and implementation of knowledge at an advanced level in a professional context.
- 5.2.2 Unless otherwise provided for in faculty rules due to statutory and professional body requirements, doctoral degrees consist of a minimum number of 360 credits.
- 5.2.3 Coursework may be required as part of the conditions for the attainment of the doctoral degree by research, but does not form part of the formal credit structure of the qualification.
- 5.2.4 A professional doctoral degree offered by the university consists of a combination of research and coursework, where the research component must contribute at least sixty percent (60%) to the credit structure of the qualification and may also include appropriate forms of work-integrated learning.

5.3 Completion requirements for a doctoral degree

- 5.3.1 Subject to additional requirements that may be provided for in faculty rules, the components of a doctoral degree are –
 - 5.3.1.1 for a doctoral degree by research, a written thesis or equivalent research product, as provided for in Rule 5.4 with a minimum of 360 credits, and
 - 5.3.1.2 for a professional doctoral degree, coursework modules for which formative and summative assessments are required, and a research component in the form of a mini thesis or equivalent research product as provided for in Rule 5.4 with a minimum of 216 credits.
- 5.3.2 Faculty rules may require that a doctoral candidate must either provide evidence of a research article submitted for publication in an accredited scholarly journal or of acceptance of such by the editorial board of a scholarly journal to qualify for the degree.
- 5.3.3 Where coursework modules are required in a doctoral qualification or programme, those modules must be completed before the research component may be submitted for examination.
- 5.3.4 Subject to the requirements provided for in faculty rules and in Rule 5.3.1.2, the components of a professional doctoral degree are coursework modules for which formative and summative assessments are required, and an independent research component in the form of a single research or technical project or a series of research or technical projects, including a research article or a published or granted patent, or any of the forms of creative output provided for in Rule 5.4.3.

5.4 Requirements for the research component of a doctoral degree

- 5.4.1 Subject to the exceptions provided for in Rule 5.4.2 and Rule 5.4.3, the requirements for the research component of a doctoral degree are the successful submission and examination of a written thesis or mini thesis.
- 5.4.2 Faculty rules may provide that full or partial compliance with the research component of a doctoral degree may take the form of one or more publishable or published research articles in a specified field, taking into account the requirements of Rule 5.11 and Rule 5.12, and specifying the minimum number of research articles required in lieu of a thesis, mini thesis or the research component of a professional doctoral degree.
- 5.4.3 Faculty rules may provide that full or partial compliance with the research component of a doctoral degree may include published patents or granted patents in a relevant field, taking into account the prescripts of Rule 5.13.3 and Rule 5.13.4.
- 5.4.4 Faculty rules may provide that the requirements for the research component of specified doctoral degree programmes may be met, either partially or in full, by –
 - 5.4.4.1 the performance of a series of concerts;
 - 5.4.4.2 the compilation of a portfolio of creative works consisting of artefacts, artworks, designs or compositions, or
 - 5.4.4.3 the presentation of a professional exhibition consisting of a set of original artworks, artefacts, installations or conceptualisations.

5.5 Credit accumulation and transfer

- 5.5.1 Credit recognition and transfer must be based on modules or coursework components completed on an equivalent NQF level as the doctoral degree.
- 5.5.2 When applying for admission to register for a doctoral degree study, a prospective study for doctoral study may apply to the executive dean concerned for recognition of completed equivalent coursework modules required for the doctoral degree qualification or programme for which the candidate wishes to seek admission.
- 5.5.3 In an application contemplated in Rule 5.5.2 is based on credits achieved in a qualification or programme offered by the university that the candidate has not completed, the executive dean concerned may, within the framework of the applicable faculty rules, grant any or all credits as applied for to satisfy part of the requirements of the qualification or programme concerned.
- 5.5.4 If an application contemplated in Rule 5.5.2 is not based on credits achieved in a qualification or programme offered by the university that the candidate has not completed, the candidate must complete fifty percent (50%) of the coursework modules of the qualification or programme at the university.

5.6 Additional coursework modules

A candidate who registers for a doctoral degree may apply to the executive dean via the student portal to be allowed to register for additional modules besides those required for the curriculum of the qualification or programme concerned, subject to the following conditions:

- 5.6.1 no timetable clashes are brought about thereby, and
- 5.6.2 the maximum number of credits for which a candidate may register in a given academic year, as provided for in Rule 1.8. is not exceeded.

5.7 Registration

- 5.7.1 A candidate who does not register on or before the required registration date determined for that purpose in the annual university calendar may, in the same calendar year, apply to the executive dean concerned for late registration for which the payment of a penalty may be prescribed by the registrar.
- 5.7.2 A candidate who does not register in a particular year, but who wishes to continue the study in the subsequent year, must apply for readmission to the executive dean concerned.
- 5.7.3 The executive dean concerned may set reasonable conditions for readmission in a subsequent year.
- 5.7.4 If, in any year, a doctoral candidate fails to re-register on or before the required registration date determined for that purpose in the annual university calendar, the academic director or deputy dean concerned may assign the topic of the planned research, if already registered, to another candidate in the same research entity.
- 5.7.5 Re-registration for coursework modules:
A candidate may, in the course of the maximum period allowed for the study, repeat coursework modules constituting not more than twenty-five percent (25%) of the total credits of the coursework component of a doctoral degree programme.
- 5.7.6 Exemption from registration
 - 5.7.6.1 Where a doctoral degree candidate is required to make minor changes to an examined thesis or mini thesis with an outcome in accordance with Rule 5.16.5.1.2, such candidate does not have to register for a new academic year, provided that the required changes are made satisfactorily by the middle of February of the year concerned or, if the registrar so directs, before the closure of the graduation list, and then the degree may be awarded at the autumn graduation ceremony of that year.
 - 5.7.6.2 A doctoral candidate who has passed all coursework modules required for the completion of a programme leading to a doctoral qualification but one, may qualify for an additional final assessment opportunity in the outstanding module in accordance with Rule 1.12.7.1 or Rule 1.12.7.2, whichever is applicable.

5.8 Leave of absence

- 5.8.1 A registered doctoral degree candidate who motivates the reasons for not continuing with studies in a particular year may apply to the executive dean via the student portal for leave of absence for the relevant year.
- 5.8.2 Leave of absence may only be granted for one year in the course of enrolment of a candidate.
- 5.8.3 A doctoral candidate who is granted leave of absence remains liable for the paying of the registration fees for the period of absence.
- 5.8.4 A doctoral candidate who has been granted leave of absence does not have access to any campus and on-line facilities of the university.
- 5.8.5 The rules relating to the maximum duration of study provided for in Rule 1.13 continue to apply despite the granting of leave of absence.
- 5.8.6 The university retains the right to cancel the studies of a doctoral candidate who does not register in the year following the period of approved absence.
- 5.8.7 The granting of leave of absence to an international student is subject to the full payment in advance of the registration fees for the year of absence.

5.9 Supervision

- 5.9.1 A doctoral degree study must be registered within the academic scope of either a research entity or a school.
- 5.9.2 A candidate admitted to a doctoral degree programme works under the supervision of a promoter and co-promoter where applicable, appointed, subject to the approval of the faculty board concerned, by the academic director or deputy dean concerned in terms of the applicable faculty rules.
- 5.9.3 To act as promoter or co-promoter of the research component of a doctoral degree, the promoter and co-promoter must be in possession of a doctoral degree in a cognate field of study.
- 5.9.4 Notwithstanding the requirements of faculty rules, a faculty board may in exceptional circumstances approve the appointment of a co-promoter on the grounds of relevant technical expertise despite such a person not being in possession of a doctoral degree.
- 5.9.5 A doctoral candidate may, before submitting a research product for examination, raise dissatisfaction with any aspect of the guidance provided by a promoter or co-promoter in writing to the executive dean concerned, who must respond in writing to the candidate before the research product is submitted for examination.

5.10 Research proposal and title registration

- 5.10.1 A candidate enrolled for a doctoral degree by research must, within twelve months after the final date of registration for doctoral degrees determined in the annual university calendar, submit a research proposal and proposed title for the thesis for approval and registration by a body designated for the purpose.
- 5.10.2 A candidate enrolled for a professional doctoral degree must, in consultation with a possible promoter and within six months after the completion of the last required module assessment of the degree, submit a research proposal and proposed title for the required research project for approval and registration by a body designated for the purpose in the faculty rules.
- 5.10.3 Subject to exceptions provided for in the applicable faculty rules, a candidate enrolled for a professional doctoral degree which requires a single research project, must, in consultation with a possible supervisor and within six months after the completion of the last required module assessment of the degree, submit a research proposal and proposed title for the research project for approval and registration by a body designated for the purpose in the faculty rules.
- 5.10.4 Every research proposal is subject to ethical clearance, and confirmation must be submitted to the faculty higher degrees committee.
- 5.10.5 The university may terminate a candidate's registration if the required research proposal is not submitted for approval in time.

5.11 Submission of the research product of a doctoral degree for examination

- 5.11.1 A candidate registered for a doctoral degree must, with the written consent of the promoter concerned, submit the thesis, mini thesis or other research product contemplated in Rule 5.4 for examination on or before the date determined for submission in the annual University calendar in order to qualify for graduation at the appointed graduation ceremony.
- 5.11.2 Where the promoter withholds permission for the submission of a research product for examination, the academic director or deputy dean concerned may, after consultation with the promoter and the candidate, recommend to the executive dean on the readiness of the research product for submission for examination.
- 5.11.3 A thesis, mini thesis or other research product of a doctoral study must comply with the technical requirements provided for in the Manual for Higher Degree Studies .

5.12 Research articles submitted as research product

- 5.12.1 Where faculty rules require that a research article must be submitted to an accredited scholarly journal as part of the requirements for the degree, the candidate must provide evidence of such submission.
- 5.12.2 Where a candidate is allowed to submit the research product in the form of research articles, such research product must be presented for examination purposes as an integrated unit, supplemented with a problem statement, an introduction and a synoptic conclusion and the manuscript submission guidelines, or the URL link to the manuscript guidelines of the journal or journals concerned.

5.13 Performing arts, visual arts or a patent submitted as examination requirement

- 5.13.1 Where a candidate for a doctoral degree in the performing arts performed an approved concert programme, the candidate must also submit a manuscript that complies with the requirements for a research report at doctoral level, together with a digital sound or video recording of the concert in a previously approved format.
- 5.13.2 Where a candidate for a doctoral degree in the visual or tactile arts held an approved exhibition, the exhibition must be assembled and a manuscript must be submitted that complies with the requirements for a research report at doctoral level, together with a series of photographs of the works in the exhibition in an approved format.
- 5.13.3 Where any published patent application or granted patent is submitted as the research product of a doctoral degree programme to which the candidate for a doctoral degree and other inventors have contributed, the candidate must obtain a written statement from the NWU Technology Transfer and Innovation Support Department containing the written permission of co-inventors granting permission for the research product to be used for the stated purpose.
- 5.13.4 Where co-inventors as contemplated in Rule 5.13.3 were involved in the development of the research product, the candidate must mention this fact in the preface, and must include the statement of the NWU Technology Transfer and Innovation Support Department in the thesis, mini thesis or research report immediately following the preface to the research product.
- 5.13.5 The higher degree's administration must make an electronic copy of the research product of a candidate for a doctoral degree available for inspection by the university community for a period of at least 14 calendar days after it was dispatched to the examiners, and notice of such availability must be given in a suitable manner.

5.14 Withdrawal of a research product after submission for examination

After its submission for examination a research product may not be withdrawn.

5.15 Classification of a research product as confidential

The university's rules regarding the classification of a research product as confidential must be taken into account in the process of the examination of the research product of a doctoral degree.

5.16 Examination

5.16.1 Appointment of examiners for the research component of a doctoral degree

- 5.16.1.1 The executive dean concerned must appoint, with the approval of the faculty higher degrees committee concerned, at least three examiners, of which at least two must be external, and attached to different institutions, for the examination of the research product of every doctoral degree study.
- 5.16.1.2 The name of an examiner appointed in accordance with Rule 5.16.1.1 is not made known to the candidate before or during the examination, and after the examination only with the permission of the examiner concerned.
- 5.16.1.3 A person who was involved in any manner in the supervision of a doctoral degree candidate may not be appointed as an examiner.

5.16.2 Examination and moderation

- 5.16.2.1 The examination of a coursework module of a professional doctoral degree is moderated externally unless the module is examined externally.
- 5.16.2.2 The external examiner must be a person with the required qualifications at NQF level 10, provided that such a person may not be an employee or otherwise connected to the university by way of an extraordinary appointment.
- 5.16.2.3 Faculty rules must specify for every doctoral degree programme whether only the examination materials or additional summative assessment components must be submitted for external moderation.
- 5.16.2.4 External moderators must be appointed for at least one, but not more than three consecutive years on the recommendation of the academic director or deputy dean concerned and approved by the faculty board.
- 5.16.2.5 An external moderator is required to mark at least ten percent of the examination scripts for each paper written and to do random checks of at least twenty percent of examination scripts for each paper.
- 5.16.2.6 Where less than fifty candidates submitted examination scripts, at least ten scripts must be marked by the external moderator, and, in cases where less than ten candidates submitted examination scripts, all the examination scripts must be marked by the external moderator.
- 5.16.2.7 An external moderator is required to comment on the validity of the assessment instruments, the quality of candidate performance and the standard of candidate attainment, the reliability of the marking process, and any concerns or irregularities with respect to the observation of institutional and, where applicable, professional regulations.
- 5.16.2.8 The examiners of a thesis, mini thesis or any other research product are required to provide an assessment of the question whether the research contains proof that the candidate demonstrates insight into the field and has made a distinct and original scholarly contribution to the knowledge base of the field, either by way of the pronouncement and dissemination of new facts or insights, or by means of the exercise of independent critical skills.
- 5.16.2.9 Every examiner submits a separate written report on the research product to the appropriate administrative component of the faculty concerned, to be forwarded for processing and finalisation by the faculty committee concerned.
- 5.16.2.10 The promoter or co-promoter of a doctoral candidate does not communicate or negotiate with an examiner on any issues relating to the examination of the candidate's research product.
- 5.16.2.11 The faculty higher degrees committee or other faculty structure responsible for the approval of the research component of doctoral degrees considers all examination reports relating to the research product of a doctoral degree study for recommendation to and the final approval by the faculty board concerned, of the assessment outcome.
- 5.16.2.12 Subject to the provisions of Rule 5.16.7.3, the unanimous finding of the examiners that a doctoral candidate passes an examination is final.

5.16.3 Second examination opportunity in coursework modules

The executive dean concerned may, after consultation with the academic director or deputy dean concerned, grant a candidate who failed an examination in a coursework module of a doctoral degree programme a second examination or assessment opportunity.

5.16.4 Requirements for passing a coursework module

5.16.4.1 Notwithstanding the provisions of Rule 1.12.3.1.2 and Rule 1.12.3.2.1 (whichever is applicable), faculty rules may require a final module mark higher than fifty percent (50%) to pass a coursework module in a professional doctoral degree.

5.16.4.2 Notwithstanding the provisions of Rule 1.12.3.1, where an examination mark forms part of the final module mark, a subminimum of fifty percent (50%) must be obtained in the examination, and faculty rules may provide that a subminimum of more than fifty percent (50%) is required.

5.16.5 Recommendations relating to the examination of the research product in a doctoral qualification or programme

5.16.5.1 An examiner may recommend that a research product –

5.16.5.1.1 be accepted unconditionally;

5.16.5.1.2 be accepted on condition that specified revisions be made to the satisfaction of the supervisor;

5.16.5.1.3 be accepted on condition that specified revisions of a substantive nature be made to the satisfaction of the academic director or deputy dean concerned;

5.16.5.1.4 be accepted on condition that specified revisions of a substantive nature be made to the satisfaction of the examiners concerned;

5.16.5.1.5 not be accepted in its current format, in which case it is referred back to the candidate for revision, elaboration or amendment and resubmission for re-examination, or

5.16.5.1.6 not be accepted at all, in which case the candidate fails.

5.16.5.1.7 All comments received from the university community as contemplated in Rule 5.13.5 must be submitted to the executive dean concerned before expiry of the period for which a research product is made available for inspection, who must forward such comments to the faculty higher degrees committee or other faculty structure concerned for evaluation together with the examiners' reports.

5.16.6 Revisions to and re-examination of the research product of a doctoral degree

5.16.6.1 The supervisor of a research product must, within 14 calendar days after receipt of all the examiners' reports and in consultation with the academic director or deputy dean concerned, provide the candidate with a memorandum setting out the nature and extent of the revision or elaboration required as contemplated in Rule 5.16.5.1.2, Rule 5.16.5.1.3, Rule 5.16.5.1.4 and Rule 5.16.5.1.5.

5.16.6.2 In order to be recorded as a graduate in the academic year during which the research product was submitted for examination, a revised, amended or elaborated research product must be submitted before or on the submission date determined for that purpose in the annual university calendar of the year concerned.

5.16.6.3 Where a candidate is required to revise or elaborate a research product, the revised product must be submitted within one year after receipt by the candidate of the result as contemplated in Rule 5.16.6.1, but, if the candidate provides valid grounds in an application, the executive dean concerned may grant an extension.

5.16.6.4 A research product that has been revised in accordance with an outcome in terms of Rule 5.16.5.1.5 may be referred back to a candidate only once and, after revision, be submitted once for re-examination.

5.16.6.5 The examiners who were appointed for the original examination are deemed also to have been appointed for the re-examination, but if considered necessary or expedient, other or additional examiners may be appointed.

5.16.7 Vagueness or differences regarding examination results

5.16.7.1 Where, in the case of a coursework module, the examiners or moderators are not unanimous about whether a candidate should pass a module, or pass a module with distinction, or where, in the case of a research product, the comments received by members of the university community in accordance with Rule 5.13.5 differ materially from the recommendations of the examiners, the executive dean concerned must follow the procedures provided for in Rule 5.16.7.2 before taking the final decision regarding the outcome.

5.16.7.2 A material difference regarding the examination of a research product as concluded in accordance with Rule 5.16.5.1 is deemed to exist if –

- 5.16.7.2.1 the reports of the examiners differ on the question whether the research product may be accepted, with or without revisions, should be referred back for revision, or should be rejected; or
- 5.16.7.2.2 comments that arise from the release of the research product for inspection by the university community in accordance with Rule 5.13.5 differ materially from the recommendations of the examiners.
- 5.16.7.3 Where differences in the nature contemplated in Rule 5.16.7.1 occur, the executive dean may, in consultation with the academic director or deputy dean concerned, seek clarification from the examiners or members of the university community who have submitted comments on the research product regarding anything that is not clear in their reports or comments relating to a coursework module or research product.
- 5.16.7.4 The executive dean concerned must take steps to resolve the outcome of an examination where a material difference arises as contemplated in Rule 5.16.7.2, which may include –
 - 5.16.7.4.1 inviting a knowledgeable external expert to advise the faculty higher degrees committee or similar structure;
 - 5.16.7.4.2 the appointment of an additional external examiner to assess the research product in accordance with Rule 5.16.2.2 and whose assessment will be included in the finalisation of the assessment result, or
 - 5.16.7.4.3 the appointment of an independent arbitrator whose role is confined to considering the research report, as well as the examiners' reports, and to make a recommendation regarding the assessment result, excluding award of any mark.
- 5.16.7.5 The faculty board concerned approves the final outcome of an examination after consideration of the recommendation of the faculty higher degrees committee or similar structure on the assessment result based on the outcome of the steps taken by the executive dean in accordance with Rule 5.16.7.4, and, if the faculty board is unable to resolve the matter, the executive dean must take a final decision.

5.16.8 **Dispute resolution**

- 5.16.8.1 A doctoral candidate who raises a substantive objection to the manner in which the examination of a research product was conducted, may declare, by means of a written notice lodged with the registrar within 14 days after communication to the candidate of the final decision regarding the assessment outcome, a dispute with the university.
- 5.16.8.2 Within ten days of receiving the declaration of a dispute as contemplated in Rule 5.16.8.1, the registrar must obtain clarification from the executive dean concerned whether the objection raised by the candidate is justified or not, cause remedial steps to be taken if necessary, and respond to the complainant accordingly.
- 5.16.8.3 If the complainant is not satisfied with the response of the registrar, the registrar must convene a panel consisting of at least two executive deans not previously involved in the matter to adjudicate the dispute within fourteen working days.
- 5.16.8.4 The findings of the panel established in accordance with Rule 5.16.8.3 may be that –
 - 5.16.8.4.1 the correct procedures were followed and that the dispute has no merit;
 - 5.16.8.4.2 the matter is referred back to the executive dean concerned to ensure that procedural shortcomings or errors that were found are corrected;
 - 5.16.8.4.3 the matter should be referred to an alternative dispute resolution process, or
 - 5.16.8.4.4 the matter be referred for arbitration.
- 5.16.8.5 If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome contemplated in Rule 5.16.8.4.1 or Rule 5.16.8.4.2, or the panel finds that the matter should be dealt with by means of an alternative dispute resolution process in accordance with Rule 5.16.8.4.3 and the complainant agrees, the registrar must cause a panel of at least three persons expert in the field concerned or with wide experience in postgraduate examination to be appointed with notice to the complainant to investigate the complaint and make recommendations for its resolution.

- 5.16.8.6 If the panel refers the matter for arbitration in accordance with Rule 5.16.8.4.4, the executive dean concerned and the complainant must each, within three weeks, submit to the registrar the names and details of no more than three persons to be appointed as arbitrator or arbitration panel, all arbitrators being expert in the field concerned or with wide experience in postgraduate examination, and the complainant must agree in writing to bear or share the costs of the arbitration if such is the outcome as contemplated in Rule 5.16.8.8.
- 5.16.8.7 An arbitrator appointed in accordance with Rule 5.16.8.6 must be informed or be prepared to become informed about the arbitration procedures contained in the latest edition of the Rules for the Conduct of Arbitrations of the Association of Arbitrators (Southern Africa) and to apply these rules for the purposes of settling the dispute.
- 5.16.8.8 The outcome of an arbitration process may include an award for specific performance, an interdict, damages, a fine, a cost order, including costs regarding legal representation on an attorney-client scale or any other order the arbiter or arbitration panel considers to be appropriate in the circumstances.

5.17 Oral defence of an examined research product

- 5.17.1 Faculty rules may require that a formal oral examination or defence forms part of the academic requirements for the qualification.
- 5.17.2 The oral defence (viva voce) shall only be conducted after –
- 5.17.2.1 examiners have passed the candidate,
- 5.17.2.2 corrections have been attended to by the candidate, and
- 5.17.2.3 the faculty board has recorded the conclusion of the written examination process.
- 5.17.3 The oral defence must be concluded within three months after the confirmation of the results of the written examination.

5.18 Intellectual property in and publication of research products

- 5.18.1 All intellectual property that may be created in the course of a doctoral degree study is governed by the Intellectual Property Policy of the University.
- 5.18.2 The university is entitled to physically or electronically multiply and distribute or make available any research product submitted in its final form by a doctoral degree candidate.
- 5.18.3 A doctoral degree graduate is required to undertake the publication of the results of the study within six months of conferral of the degree, but the university may, if the graduate does not do so, undertake publication after notification of its intention to do so.
- 5.18.4 Publication by the university as contemplated in Rule 5.18.3 may be undertaken without the written permission of the graduate, but the name of the graduate concerned must be acknowledged as the first author, except where substantial processing of the text is undertaken by another person, or if the graduate expresses the wish in writing not so to be cited.
- 5.18.5 A doctoral candidate who is in terms of these rules required to, or otherwise wishes to submit a publication based on a research product of the study, must obtain the advice of the promoter concerned regarding the scholarly quality of the research product, the selection of a suitable publication or publication medium, possible considerations of confidential classification, and the requirements and implications of Rules 5.18.7 and Rule 5.18.8.
- 5.18.6 The promoter concerned must record compliance with Rule 5.18.5 in the report contemplated in Rule 1.14.4.
- 5.18.7 In a publication referred to in Rule 5.18.5 the promoter or promoters must be cited.
- 5.18.8 A doctoral degree graduate is deemed to be the sole author of a research product of the study unless another person, including the promoter, makes a substantial contribution to the production of the publication, as distinguished from the supervised research product, to warrant co-authorship taking the conventions of the discipline concerned into account, or where another person takes the primary responsibility for the writing of the publication to the extent that it justifies the first authorship of such other person.

5.19 Embargo period for a completed thesis in regard of which the degree had been conferred

- 5.19.1 A doctoral graduate may request the Chief Director Library Services via the relevant library portal for an embargo period of up to two years for the publication of the research product on the NWU repository, Boloka.
- 5.19.2 In all instances master graduates must adhere to the publication schedules of external research sponsors such as the NRF.

5.20 Extension of the study period

- 5.20.1 An application for extension of the study period by a doctoral degree candidate submitted to the executive dean via the student portal must be supported by a recommendation by the academic director or deputy dean concerned.
- 5.20.2 An application for extension of the period of study for a doctoral degree must indicate –
 - 5.20.2.1 that the research topic is still relevant,
 - 5.20.2.2 what progress has been made by the applicant,
 - 5.20.2.3 what remains to be done to complete the study,
 - 5.20.2.4 what the time schedule for completion is, and
 - 5.20.2.5 whether the promoter is still available.
- 5.20.3 The grant of an extension for the study contemplated in this rule is subject to the payment of a levy determined by the registrar.

5.21 Attainment of the degree

Taking into account Rule 1.3.3, Rule 1.13, Rule 1.16, Rule 1.18.3 and Rule 5.2, a doctoral degree may be awarded when final verification and audit confirmation is given that a candidate has satisfied the requirements provided for in Rule 5.3 and Rule 5.4.