



CENTRE FOR POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

Guidelines for Supervisors

TEACHING AT POSTGRADUATE LEVEL

- To teach and supervise students at the master's and doctoral programme levels, a member of staff shall have a doctoral degree or equivalent in the discipline of the postgraduate programme being offered.
- To teach and supervise students at the postgraduate diploma programme levels, a member of staff shall have a Master's or equivalent in the discipline of the postgraduate programme being offered
- Members of staff without PhD or equivalent qualifications but with specialized expertise can co-teach with members of staff holding doctoral degrees.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF SUPERVISORS

- A supervisor for Master's and Doctoral students must have a doctoral degree and expertise in the field of study that he/she is expected to supervise. In addition, the supervisor must have relevant research and publication experience.
- In exceptional cases a supervisor without a doctoral degree will be considered to supervise Master's students (normally as a co-supervisor) subject to approval by the UNAM PGSC.
- The supervisor must have a thorough understanding of the University's Postgraduate Regulations and Guidelines, in order to effectively guide the student towards attaining the stipulated standards.
- Supervisors have the responsibility of ensuring that their students make progress in their studies. Where there are problems affecting the student's research progress, these shall be communicated to the UNAM Postgraduate Studies Committee through the Head of the relevant Department and the Faculty Postgraduate Studies Committee.

- Supervisors should understand that:

The Master's thesis research programme is designed as a **training** course, whereby it is intended that the student will:

- be exposed to the fundamentals of research,
- acquire certain new techniques and methods of research,
- learn how to present the results of research in a scholarly manner, and
- make some contribution to knowledge

Master's students require close and careful supervision because they usually lack previous research experience, especially during the early stages of their theses (when learning about research methodology, experimental design and research technique) and also when preparing the initial drafts of their theses



- The supervisor of a Doctoral candidate should recognize that the candidates, in most cases, will have acquired some research experience when they were Master's degree students. What is expected of the Doctoral candidate is thus qualitatively and quantitatively more than outlined above for Master's degree students. Here the supervisor expects the candidate to:
 - **make a distinct and original contribution** to knowledge, of fact and/or theory;
 - produce a considerable amount of **original work**;
 - undertake a more critical and extensive review of the relevant literature than is the case for Master's students, and
 - exercise considerable initiative in conducting the research



Both the supervisor and the student must submit compulsory reports on the progress of the student to the relevant HoD Postgraduate Studies before the end of each semester (Annex 3A and 3B). The Faculty PGSC will study the reports and take the necessary steps to resolve problems (where necessary).



A summary report of all progress reports received and recommendations from the Faculty PGSC on problems identified and actions taken must be tabled during the July and November UNAM PGSC meetings



In order to ensure that the thesis/dissertation research proposals benefit from inputs from other academics in the Departments, every Faculty offering postgraduate programmes shall, in consultation with the supervisors, arrange compulsory research at least two seminars, which will enable the candidates to refine and improve the research proposal, report on progress and learn from others



There must at least one (1) supervisor for Master's and two (2) for Doctoral Candidate nominated by the department.

- After completion of a research proposal, the doctoral candidate should be able to work independently and be guided rather than be directed by his/her supervisor. It is, nevertheless, the supervisor's responsibility to guide the candidate in the right direction.
- During the initial phase, the supervisors have the responsibility of assisting their candidates in the design and formulation of appropriate postgraduate research projects.
- Supervisors should be able to determine, through their previous research experience, potential impediments to the research problem and advise the students on what can be achieved meaningfully, within the time allocated for the study.
- The supervisors have the responsibility of monitoring the student's research progress throughout the research period:

- The supervisor has the ultimate responsibility of assisting the student to give an appropriate title to the thesis/dissertation, and to guide him/her on the presentation of the research results in the form of a scholarly thesis/dissertation, in accordance with the set guidelines.
- The supervisor and student should have regular meetings to discuss progress on the research project.
- Although the writing of the postgraduate thesis/dissertation is the responsibility of the student, it is the supervisor's role to ensure that the standards set by the University are adhered to. The supervisor should:
 - be accessible to the student during the critical stage of thesis/dissertation writing;
 - discuss the drafts of the thesis/ dissertation with the student throughout the process;
 - read the student's thesis/ dissertation carefully and critically, indicating where improvements are needed, e.g., where there is paucity of information, and where the important findings could be published, , etc.;



- at the conclusion of the work, read the entire thesis/ dissertation, and advise whether or not it is in a form suitable for presentation to examiners;
- but should not be responsible for personally editing language usage in the thesis, or correcting typographical errors. He/she should however, point out language and typographical errors.
- If the student has two or more supervisors, one of these should be appointed as main supervisor and the rest as co-supervisor(s).
- Should a supervisor be away from the University for more than three consecutive months, an acting supervisor must be appointed. In the case of absence of main supervisor, the co-supervisor will act. Where a student has only one supervisor an acting supervisor must be appointed by UNAM PGSC on recommendation of the Faculty PGSC.
- Where continued supervision is a condition of sabbatical or extended research leave, the Head of Department must ensure that these conditions are adhered to.
- Where a supervisor retires or resigns from the University, he/she shall cease from supervising any student(s) under his charge, unless there is an agreement in writing for the continued supervision of the student(s).
- If, in the course of the student's research, a situation develops whereby:
 - there is a breakdown in communication between the student and the supervisor;
 - there are personal clashes and conflicts between the two;
 - the student refuses to follow the supervisor's advice;
 - a change will enhance the progress of the student the case should be reported in writing to the Head of the relevant Department by either the supervisor or the student. The Head of Department has the responsibility to hear both sides of the case (that is, from the supervisor and the student) with a written report and recommendation to the Faculty PGSC for possible action. The Faculty PGSC will study the report and take action or make a recommendation (where applicable) to the UNAM PGSC.

- Staff members from research institutions will be allowed to supervise ten (10) students; the main supervision will be counted as 1 and co-supervision as 0.5 students, respectively. To ensure adequate supervision, a single staff member shall not supervise more than five (5) postgraduate students at any given time. Staff members' supervision responsibilities should be taken into consideration by Heads of Departments when other teaching duties are assigned
- All supervisors will be remunerated upon approval of the graduation of the student by AEC, according to the tariffs determined by the University from time to time (Annex 17). Progress reports of the student during the duration of the study, signed by the supervisor(s), should accompany the claim form (Annex 18).

GENERAL ENQUIRIES

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