

# Faculty code of practice for *Pro Gradu* research projects

This code sets out the ideal to which the faculty is working in its provision of support to final year students undertaking MSc thesis projects. The purpose of this code is to establish clear explicit mutual expectations and so to minimise the risks and problems which students and their supervisors might encounter during the course of the research project.

## 1 Responsibilities of the Faculty

The responsibilities of the Faculty include the provision of the following facilities, resources and support during the period of the research project for students:

- a) the allocation of appropriately qualified supervisor(s).
- b) to provide information and guidance on Faculty regulations and the examination process of the research report for the student and for the supervisor(s)
- c) to appoint two independent examiners for each *Pro Gradu* project, and make sure that they are aware of all the necessary factors that may influence the reviewing process
- d) to have in place a clear complaints procedure to which students may have recourse if dissatisfied with any aspect of their supervision or with the facilities available for their research.
- e) to appoint a Faculty Project Co-ordinator
- f) to decide the acceptance of the thesis and to assign the final mark

## 2 Responsibilities of the Faculty Project Co-ordinator

The Project Co-ordinator is responsible, through the Vice Dean for Education, for ensuring that the Faculty has fulfilled its responsibilities to its students as detailed above. In addition the project coordinator is responsible for the acceptance of the student research proposal.

## 3 Supervisors' Responsibilities

Every final year student will have one or more supervisors whose responsibilities are:

- a) to advise the student on the choice of a suitable project
- b) to give guidance about the nature of research and the standard expected, the planning of the research programme, the relevant literature and sources, requisite research techniques (including arranging for instruction if necessary) and the problem of plagiarism.
- c) to advise the student on their rights/duties with respect to publications or patents arising from the work
- d) to arrange regular meetings with the student, to set aside adequate time to discuss progress and future work and to be accessible to give advice at other times where appropriate
- e) to consider the safety implications of their students' research. Supervisors are responsible for all aspects of safety which fall within their control and in particular for the safe conduct of experiments carried out in the course of their students' research.
- f) to arrange for the provision of alternative supervision in the event of an extended absence. This should be done in consultation with the student and the Project Co-ordinator should be informed.
- g) to give detailed advice on the necessary completion dates of successive stages of the work in order to ensure that a report is submitted within the time allowed by the regulations.
- h) to arrange, as appropriate, for the student to talk about his/her work to staff or at seminars and provide encouragement and advice with regard to possible publication of his/her work;
- i) to warn the student and to advise the Project Co-ordinator of inadequate progress or of standards of work below that generally expected.
- j) to advise the Project Co-ordinator should the student/supervisor relationship break down.
- k) to give advice on the preparation of the report including style, clarity, data presentation and reference

format. To provide detailed comments on a draft report and to advise the student if the standard of the language used is inadequate. The supervisor is not however expected to undertake substantial editing or revision of a draft report. Ultimately, the student is responsible for his/her work and the supervisor's responsibility is to give guidance.

l) To draft a summary document (maximal one side of A4) to help the examiners (the draft includes comments on the student's performance and the final thesis, including also such details which may be relevant for the reviewers such as illness or break down of an equipment during the research period). This statement is to be written and sent to the Faculty in two copies such that it is available for the reviewers at the same time as the Thesis.

#### **4 Students' Responsibilities**

Final year students are reminded that they have correlative responsibilities which include:

- a) to discuss with the supervisor(s) the type of guideline and form of comment found most helpful.
- b) to agree with the supervisor(s) a schedule of meetings and to attend such meetings
- c) to produce work in accordance with a schedule agreed with the supervisor(s) including in particular the submission of written material in sufficient time to allow adequate comment and discussion before proceeding to the next stage of the research programme.
- d) to take the initiative in raising problems or difficulties, however elementary they may seem.
- e) to attend such formal instruction as is required by the supervisor(s) and by the faculty.
- f) to familiarise himself/herself with the instructions and guidelines issued by the Project Co-ordinator
- g) to carry out their research with regard to good health and safety.
- h) in the event of the student being dissatisfied with any aspect of the supervisory or other arrangements, discussing such dissatisfaction with the Project Co-ordinator at the earliest possible opportunity and in any event during the period of project and before submitting the report. In the event of such discussions not producing a satisfactory outcome, the student should submit a formal written statement to the Vice Dean for Education, before the end of the period of the project, outlining the reasons for his/her dissatisfaction.
- i) to complete any written reports (e.g. draft report) when requested to do so.
- j) to discuss with the supervisor the preparation of the report and to decide, taking due account of advice from the supervisor, when it is ready for submission.
- k) to submit a report by the published deadline.
- l) to apply for extension from the Project Co-ordinator for the experimental or writing periods due to acceptable reasons (such as illness or break down of an equipment)

Students should note that they are responsible for their work and that the role of the supervisor(s) is to provide guidance and advice.