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POLICY GUIDELINE *for* GRADUATE RESEARCH

ECSU

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Policy Guideline for Graduate Research

Foreword

The purpose of this Policy Guideline for Graduate Research is to establish clear guidelines and responsibilities for both masters and doctoral studies. The document intends to simplify and organize the thesis/dissertation writing process, while maintaining high academic standards of the School of Graduate Studies in the Ethiopian Civil Service University (ECSU). Ultimately, the document supports the applied research focus and the national development agenda of Ethiopia.

The essential function of all higher education and specifically post graduate studies is the advancement of knowledge through research. Research must be enhanced in all disciplines, including the social and human sciences, education, engineering, natural sciences, mathematics, informatics and the arts within the framework of national and international research and development policies. Of special importance is the enhancement of research capacities in higher education research institutions, as mutual enhancement of quality takes place when higher education and research are conducted at a high level within the same institution (UNESCO 1998).

Despite differences in magnitude the hallmark of research in graduate studies is contribution to the stock of scientific knowledge which is the outcome of scholarly inquiry, investigation, or experimentation having as an objective:

- The development of new concepts
- The revision, refinement, extension, or verification of existing concepts
- The application of existing concepts to new situations, or
- The development of new or improved techniques

Research theses or dissertations at graduate level are expected to be scientific in terms of:

- employing reliable (verifiable, documentable) sources, data and methods
- following valid lines of reasoning and completeness with which the context is taken into account

- Relying on empirical evidence and being assessable or “refutability” of study results (openness to criticism, possibility of negation, falsification)
- being critical of oneself
- utilizing relevant concepts
- commitment to only objective considerations
- ethical neutrality- making only adequate and correct statements about population objects
- resulting into probabilistic predictions
- explicit methodology open to all for scrutiny for use in testing the conclusions through replications, and
- formulating general axioms or by way of contributing to the development of scientific theories.

A scientific study contributes to the deepening of the scientific discipline by development of theory (generation of new knowledge, refuting or amending existing views), criticizing existing supposition, new methods and techniques of study, policy instruments and product development. The scientific method implies an objective, logical and systematic method. That is a method free from personal bias and or prejudice. It is the characteristics of a scientific study that its results are reliable, valid, capable, and open to criticism.

NB.

This Policy Guideline for Graduate Research needs to be read with the Ordinance for PhD Programs in the case of PhD programs.

PART I: GENERAL

1. Responsibilities of Supervisors and students

Graduate research is basically an independent endeavor. Therefore the student bears the burden of responsibility. However as part of the global knowledge building process, advisors/supervisors are assigned to guide the graduate student to maintain research quality standard. Quality supervision presupposes a positive and dynamic interface between advisors/supervisors and candidates.

Appropriate advising and supervision are vital to the successful completion of a graduate degree and implies a partnership based on scientific integrity and mutual respect that benefit both student/candidate and advisor in their research endeavor. Advisors are expected to build up a constructive and positive relationship with their research candidates.

Advisors will give guidance on the systematic recording activities of students and the communications undertaken. Advisors need to maintain regular contact with their candidates through tutorials, group meetings or at the bench. They need to guide their students through relevant use of library facilities, including approaching original literature and sources with a critical attitude and will give guidance on what it means to adhere to ethical research practices, and avoiding plagiarism.

In this respect, the graduate student and advisor become partners in the progress of the research. The student is responsible and expected to make the proposal writing, conducting the research study, the write-up and participation in conferences, colloquia, seminars and workshops. The responsibilities of the graduate student/doctoral candidate and advisor/supervisor are stated as follows.

1.1. General responsibilities of advisors/supervisors

The supervisor has the general responsibility to act in a manner which conforms to basic principles of natural justice, academic integrity and professionalism and to manage in a similar manner, conflict situations which may arise in the relationship with the student. General responsibilities of advisors/supervisor includes but not limited to:

- Maintain high professional conduct, ethics and decorum befitting respective candidates
- Be familiar with ECSU policies, guidelines and procedures as well as the Ph.D. curriculum and regulations
- Be aware of problem solving mechanisms and available support services should administrative problems arise

- Advise candidates about plans they may have for leave during the students candidature and consult with the candidate and the head of the academic unit or Director of the School of Graduate Studies about proposed arrangements for supervision during a sanctioned leave
- Ensure students publish, individually or in-group, high quality research articles in reputed Journals/Books during each academic year.
- Maintain collegial and supportive relationships with candidates and fellow advisors, professors.
- In addition to providing appropriate academic support, advisors are responsible for a number of administrative procedures associated with the candidature of a Ph.D. candidate.

1.2. Responsibilities of Supervisors

- to discuss as early in the developmental stages of their collaboration with students the general nature of their working relationships to ensure mutually compatible expectations
- to be available to students on a reasonable basis for consultation and discussion
- to make appropriate arrangements for students when they go on sabbatical leave or are on extended absence
- to play an active role in seeking to ensure the availability of basic resources required for the research, and for discussing support funding issues in cases when the supervisor is responsible for providing a “funding package”
- to assist the candidate to prepare a research plan which can be completed and written up within the prescribed period of study
- to make sure ethical approval is sought for the research, where appropriate;
- to arrange for the candidate to be familiar with the facilities and research activities of the Programme
- to encourage the student to play a full part in the social and intellectual life of the Programme
- to check that health and safety requirements are carried out in accordance with University procedures and that the student receives any required safety training
- to establish a timetable of regular meetings with the student at which all matters relating to the student’s work can be discussed. There should be at least a monthly meeting or other formal communication (such as email) of which records are kept to make sure there is a record of the contacts between the supervisor(s) and the student so that the progress of supervision can be reviewed at any stage. In the event of subsequent disagreement the records of the meetings will be an important basis on which to resolve issues

- to assist the candidate by regularly checking the records of data and observations and suggesting improvements where appropriate;
- to arrange, as appropriate, for their candidates to talk about their work to staff and/or group seminars and to have practice in oral presentations.
- to encourage their candidates to publish the results as they emerge and are suitable for publication. Advisors should encourage candidates to undergo further training, in order to expand their areas of expertise (transferable and specialist skills, etc.).
- to discuss with the student work accomplished and to review, and if necessary revise, the research objectives as the work proceeds in the light of progress made and other external factors (such as unexpected discoveries and newly published findings of other researchers)
- to submit to the program coordinator and the academic unit any report about the candidate's progress as required
- to ensure that candidates are made aware when progress is inadequate or when standards of work fall below those generally expected. Advisors must be prepared to revise the questions and hypotheses under investigation and to provide alternative ideas if the Ph.D. candidate reaches an impasse
- to advise the candidate of concern at the earliest opportunity if the candidate falls behind expected progress and to actively assist the candidate to improve;
- to advise the Department and SGS if the candidate continues not to meet expected progress and to seek advice on, or assistance with, action to be taken
- to provide timely constructive criticism and advice on submitted written drafts within one month or within time-frames agreed to
- to facilitate timely completion of the candidate's study and ultimate completion of the thesis
- to arrange (in consultation with the Department and SGS for a replacement supervisor if a sole supervisor is absent for a period exceeding four weeks
- to recommend to the Programme department the name(s) of examiner(s)
- when a thesis is accepted with "*major modification*", to demonstrate to the examining board that the required modifications have been made; to inform the program coordinator and the department in writing that the modifications have been approved
- to submit monthly and quarterly student progress report to their respective departments
- to inform the candidate that s/he may approach the Department and SGS as appropriate, if the candidate wishes to discuss any matters related to his/her supervision.

1.3. Responsibilities of Second Supervisors (co-advisor)

The responsibilities of a second supervisor(s) include the following:

- to enhance the effective supervision of the student by contributing another opinion or additional area of expertise to that of the first supervisor;
- to provide continuity of supervision in the event of the absence or departure of the first supervisor;
- to attend, as appropriate, meetings between the candidate and other supervisor(s);
- to participate in any assessment of the candidate's work;
- to arrange, in consultation with the first supervisor and the head of the program department, a replacement in the event of absences from the University for a period exceeding two months.

1.4. Responsibilities of the student

The responsibilities of the student include the following:

- to start thinking about and identify his/her research area of interest during the course of the specified time bearing in mind the thematic areas
- to submit the possible topic to program department, which in turn assigns the student a fitting advisor, upon approval by DGC/SGC/IGC
- May refine and finalize the research topic in consultation with supervisor or program coordinator.or head of the program department.
- to become familiar with, and abide by, the University's Senate Legislation governing the degree and associated procedures as contained in this and other documents such as *Ordinance for PhD programs*
- to be proactive and seek advice and support from the advisor and academic unit. (The assistance every candidate needs is at his/her disposal, but they must take the initiative.)
- to keep pace with the School of Graduate Studies and associated timelines and take the initiative and responsibility to complete their dissertation requirements within the specified timeframe.
- to apply for ethical approval for the research where appropriate;
- to carry out his/her programme of study to a high standard according to agreed research plans and within the prescribed period of study;
- not to reach agreements with outside bodies which may bind the University in any way or involve ethical or intellectual property issues without the written agreement of the ECSU.
- to agree to, and abide by, a timetable for at least monthly meetings or other formal communication (such as email) with the supervisor(s)
- to raise matters discussed informally with supervisors at timetabled meetings in order to confirm a common understanding and to enable recording of agreed action

- to submit written thesis work for comment and discussion in accordance with agreed protocols
- to report on her/his progress regularly to his/her supervisor(s);
- to bring any problem which may be interfering with study or research, including those of a social or medical nature, to the attention of the supervisor or the program coordinator, or Chair of DGC
- to present work or findings from time to time as agreed with the supervisor(s);
- to consult in confidence with the Chair of DGC if there are problems with supervision;
- to decide when to submit the thesis for examination, having taken account of the supervisor(s)' opinion(s), and to submit the thesis for examination according to the requirements set out in University regulations and this policy guideline and within the prescribed period of study in the research road map.
- to seek amicable solutions before invoking formal procedures such as lodging written complaints to the academic unit.. Formal complaints shall be addressed as per ECSU's Senate Legislation 2017.

PART II: MASTER'S THESIS

A master's thesis shall constitute an individual's effort in academic pursuit to identify and analyze problems by applying sound methodology. A thesis shall serve as partial fulfillment of the requirement for master's degree except in a program where it is not required or a non-thesis master's study. While completing a master's thesis, the student learns how to research published literature in a targeted field, how to write for a scholarly audience, and how to present one's work in writing and in public forum. More importantly, the student will learn more about a selected topic than one would learn in a classroom.

2. Quality criteria for master thesis

1. Maintain the highest degree of intellectual honesty in the design, conduct, data analysis, reporting of research findings and in acknowledging significant direct and indirect contributions by other scholars
2. Use of empirical data
3. Attachment to theory/concept: comprehensive theoretical section relevant to the research topic, with excellent source triangulation.
4. Be able to relate her or his work to the relevant scientific and technical/ industrially/ architectonic contexts, (***a thesis which is mainly an inventory of data doesn't deserve to be a master's thesis***)
5. Create, analyse and critically evaluate different technical/architectonic solutions
6. Apply basic statistical and informatics techniques
7. The results are presented in a comprehensive and diverse manner and are seamlessly connected to the theoretical background and research goals.

3. Advisorship

The SGC/IGC/DGC normally recommends the selected thesis advisor(s) to the CGC/SGS/. The thesis advisor is a full-time academic unit member with the academic rank of assistant professor and above for master's program. In the case of co-advising, in a special case, a lecturer can be assigned for advising Master's Thesis if suggested by CGC, endorsed by SGS and approved by Graduate Council. A person(s) outside of the University in the required area of specialization with a PhD degree who will be able to submit a letter of commitment in advising the student and who will be in the country at least for a year or more can also be assigned as advisor. In such cases, it will be mandatory to have a co-advisor(s) from the University.

4. Selection and approval of master's thesis topic

The topic for thesis work shall be selected in consultation with, and prior approval of, the thesis advisor. The selection of thesis topic shall be on the basis of the broad needs of the public sector and/or the priority areas of research topics as determined by the concerned Academic Unit. Special provision shall be provided for self-sponsored or foreign students. The topic of the thesis of each candidate shall be approved by the SGC/IGC/DGC or CGC as early as possible as and not later than the time of the candidate's enrollment into the second half of the program.

4.1. Master's thesis proposal

Master's students need to write a research proposal in the specified format and content before they start their master's thesis.

The proposal shall contain:

- A clear and precise title
- Introduction (a brief description of what the research proposal is about)
- Background (rationale placed within the context of existing scientific research)
- Statement of the problem (not all the problems/ opportunities (issues) on the ground but the issue which is particularly crucial and needs to be looked into)
- Conceptual framework
- Purpose/aim/objective of the study
- Research questions/hypotheses
- Refining research questions and framing "thesis statement" i.e. the main idea of the entire project or a strong statement which is a product of your own critical thinking and that you can prove with evidence
- Scope of study
- Significance of the study (identifying the audience and how the results will be beneficial to them)
- Methodology and methods (with justification to choose certain methodology, method, sampling and instrumentation)
- Anticipated limitations/constraints (which arise from the applied methodology or method, analysis tool etc. Shortage of finance, time, and lack of respondents' collaboration are not limitations and should not be considered as alibis or excuses)
- Definition of terms (terms used in the proposal that are unusual or not widely understood)
- Bibliography
- Budget schedule
- Action plan
- Appendices (interview guide, questionnaires, indexes etc.),

4.2 Budget Schedule

Take the cost for the following expenses

- traveling
- accommodation
- data collectors
- secretarial services (typing, printing, duplication, photocopying, and binding)

4.3 Notifying readiness of thesis for submission

The master's student, after conferring with the advisor has to submit the thesis according to the time schedule or roadmap issued by the School of Graduate Studies. If a student completes her /his thesis before the submission date can give notice of readiness to submit a thesis. However, no student may be permitted to submit a thesis in less than one academic year from the date of initial registration, except with a special permission of the SGC/IGC/DGC or CGC.

5. Assessment of Master's Thesis

A master's thesis shall be defended publicly in the presence of internal and external examiners and a chair person. The SGC/IGC/DGC or CGC shall appoint an examining Board and select an external examiner.

The academic unit Graduate Committee in consultation with the advisor, the department head, and the graduate (Ph.D.) program coordinator will recommend members of the examining committee for a student. The academic unit council endorses. The School of Graduate Studies (SGS) approves the internal and external examiners proposed by colleges.

5.1 Board of Examiners for master's thesis defense

The Board for master's thesis defense shall have three members consisting of at least one external examiner, internal examiner and a chairperson. The external examiner should be an outside examiner (i.e. outside the university]. The role and responsibilities of members of the Board of Examiners is stated as follows

The chairperson (CP)

Main role of the chairperson (CP) is to conduct the defence session in a professional and fair way. It is highly recommendable that the head of the academic unit serves as a chairperson in the defense sessions. This will help to maintain fairness and consistency by regulating the "bias" of different examiners while assessing different students. The role of the Chairperson is to:

- moderate the Master's Thesis defense session representing the Academic Unit in the spirit of ownership
- moderate the oral examination
- manage the allocated time
- assign marks to the oral presentation session (but not the entire paper)
- set an appropriate tone for the proceedings, and
- ensure the procedures and rules of conduct for the defence are adhered to properly.

The Advisor and Co-Advisor

The student's advisor or co-advisor shall not be part of the evaluation process although they might be present at the thesis defence. They cannot ask questions and are not expected to answer any questions for the student unless clarification is asked from the examiners. They shall not assign marks to the Master's Thesis. However the advisor can be present in the defence to share with examiners the performance of the advisee during consultation sessions in terms of visit frequency and incorporating feedbacks. Moreover it is to the advantage of the candidate if her/his advisor attends and gives a brief explanation on aspect she/he has insisted to include without the candidate's conviction.

The name of any thesis examining board who was a collaborator with the student must be indicated by the check box on the submitted thesis examining board form.

Internal and external examiner

The internal and external examiners shall assess the content as well as defense of the thesis based on criteria established in the relevant curriculum and the general criteria as prepared and circulated by School of Graduate Studies (*Master Thesis Evaluation SGS-MT: Form 004*).

5.2 External Examiner

An external examiner in general must be external to the University. Former staff members can be invited to become external examiners unless the termination of service was due to discipline problem.

The purpose of having external examiners is to ensure that degrees awarded in similar subjects at the University are comparable in standard with those awarded by other universities, though their content does vary; and secondly, that the assessment system is fair. Normally, one external examiner is required for each student thesis except for PhD and master thesis in situations where the nature of the thesis work requires more than one external examiner.

5.2.1 Selection and Appointment of External Examiners

The SGC/IGC/DGC selects external examiners and recommends to the CGC/SGS. Appointment is made by the head of the Academic Unit after the recommendation of the SGC/IGC/DGC is approved by the CGC/SGS. To this effect the program seeking the appointment for an external examiner should submit to the CGC/SGS the biographical data, including academic achievements, publications, and experience as external examiner of the nominee. In approving the nomination of an external examiner, the CGC/SGC shall ascertain the following:

- Only persons of seniority and experience who are able to command authority are appointed and in all cases must have an academic rank of at least assistant professor (or equivalent) for masters
- Preferably having high expertise in the research area
- Exceptions shall be approved by the SGC/IGC/DGC on a case by case basis when presented to it by the concerned SGC/IGC/DGC;

External examiners from outside the higher education system, for example from industry, research institutions, etc. may be selected when necessary. One external examiner should not be assigned per program for more than three theses at any one time.

An examiner evaluates a thesis by filling a form (SGS-MSc: Form-004). Examiner reports and marking forms must be submitted to the program academic unit at least one day before the oral defense.

5.2.2 Role of the External Examiner

- to serve as a member of the Board of examiners and to have a determining role in examining and deciding the fate of the thesis;
- to comment and give advice on course content, balance and structure.

5.2.3 Consideration of Feedback from External Examiner

Academic Units shall use the opportunities created by the visits of external examiners to discuss the structure and content of the course and of the graduate program and the assessment procedures. Any comments or suggestions made by the external examiners shall be discussed by the academic unit and decisions shall be made whether or not to accept the comments.

External examiners may make written confidential reports to the academic unit head at the end of their visits. They are free to make any comments they wish, including observation on teaching and course structure and content. The head shall instruct the SGC/IGC/DGC to take action with respect to the comments. The head has the

responsibility to see to it that the recommendations are considered and the proper measures are taken.

6. Oral Examination

Prior to the oral defense, the written thesis paper should be complete and virtually flawless. During the thesis defense, the master candidate is expected to present and defend thesis work in front of the student's thesis committee and other audience members, and in a cohesive manner. Students are asked a number of questions during and after the presentation, and must be armed with the knowledge and skills necessary to answer questions about the background, research design, and findings confidently. The thesis defense is an opportunity to take the stage and demonstrate growth and progress experienced as a graduate student. It allows the candidate to showcase research abilities and complete the degree requirements.

6.1 Procedures of the oral examination

- The candidate first presents the thesis orally with whatever aids are required. She/he would be given 10 – to - 15 minutes.
- Should one of the examiners raise issue of plagiarism or copied thesis, the Board of Examiners adjourns further examination of the thesis and postpones its decision, referring the thesis back to the Department of the candidate.
- Having passed this eligibility test, the candidate is then questioned on the thesis. This might take about 15-20 minutes.
- The CP will first invite the External and then the Internal Examiner to forward comments and raise questions.
- The candidate will be allowed few minutes to respond.
- The CP adjourns the examination when the Board of Examiners decides that further questioning is unnecessary.
- The examining members then proceed to begin their deliberations while the advisor, the candidate and other audiences leave the room.
- The CP collects all the completed evaluation forms after making sure that all Examiners have duly signed in their respective places. The copy used by the chairperson serves to summarize the marks given by the examiners and put the consensual verdict of the Board of Examiners.
- The Internal Examiner will invite in the candidate and the CP announces the results to the candidate.
- Then the candidate collects the manuscripts with comments of the external and internal examiners to improve her/his thesis for final submission to Department.
- The CP shall submit all completed forms to the respective Department.

6.2 Marking

The share of the mark weight by the External is 50%, while that of the Internal Examiner is 35%. The share of the mark weight by the CP is 15% and is limited only to evaluation of the presentation aspect (part 3).

Without jeopardizing the capacity of the External Examiner, it is advisable that the Board of Examiners brainstorm in which category of quality (excellent-to-fail) the thesis fails before mechanically adding the marks.

According to the Senate Legislation of the ECSU (2017) the rating or grading scale for thesis/dissertation is as follows:

6.3 Thesis/Dissertation Grading Scale

	Rank	`(%)*
1	Excellent	≥ 85
2	Very good	$75 \leq X < 85$
3	Good	$60 \leq X < 75$
4	Satisfactory	$50 \leq X < 60$
5	Fail	< 50

** Evaluation weight (%) = 0.50 x External examiner's + 0.35 x Internal examiner's + 0.15 x Chairperson*

Excellent 85-100

An excellent master's thesis should demonstrate the candidate's ability to independently collate, analyse and interpret research data using scholarly literature and theoretical perspectives which are current in the research area. The thesis should be exemplary both in the selection of problems and data for consideration and in the manner by which conclusions are drawn about the problems. The research proposal is original and has been carried out with a high degree of independence. There is considerable breadth and depth in theoretical and/or methodical reflection. The student has independently provided herself/himself for the data and literature and examined them (this includes possible fieldwork), and has shown a sound interpretative ability and critical mind.

Very Good (75-84)

The research should show very high familiarity with the literature in the area of study. The work should also reflect an in-depth integration of research data and a student's personal contributions. The analysis and interpretation parts of the thesis should demonstrate a clear understanding of the issues and critical judgment.

Good (60-74)

Objective and research questions have been formulated clearly. The subject has been chosen realistically and is well delimited. The methods to answer the research

questions have been adequately chosen and are well founded. The student has shown that he can treat scientific data reasonably well, although his analyses are generally of basic quality.

Satisfactory (50-59)

The research problem statement is not clearly stated though research questions seem relevant. At least the research strategy and instrumentation is relevant to research topic. Lacks use of different data sources (lacks triangulation). Weak review of the literature. It lacks strong argumentation. It ends up in weak /stereotyped recommendation. Whole write-up marked by fair with mistakes here and there.

Fail (<50)

Not clear about the research strategy and instrumentation alignment to analyze the research problem. It fails to identify the relevant literature for review or the review is based on a hotchpotch of irrelevant and not paraphrased paragraphs. Not based on empirical data. Research questions are not answered. The write up is done carelessly marked by grammatical errors, misuse of words, lot of mistakes in sentence construction, use of punctuation marks and capitalization.

6.4 Decision and reporting

The views of an external examiner are particularly decisive in the case of disagreement on the evaluation/rating of a particular unit of assessment. The signature of the members of the Board of examiners shall be required as evidence of their decision on the student's thesis work. External examiners are encouraged to comment on the assessment process and the schemes for marking.

PART III: ENGINEERING DESIGN RESEARCH

7. Design Research

Design research contributes to solving some problems in the practical world. It enhances the insight into possible directions of solutions of a design problem. Therefore design research is basically an applied research which is academically rigorous and professional research project. It stresses problem solving and knowledge application. A policy proposal, design or even a plan for a specific situation can be the main objective and output of the study. An object (urban plan, local development plan or area plan, property valuation, transport plan of a city, urban river basin treatment, housing and settlement planning etc.) must be designed or planned for a specific context (spatial, ecological, technical, economic, cultural and administrative). New possibilities would be sought for the determined context usually using a programme of demands. A design research explicitly deals about at least one design object and its context. So design research is defined by a practice focus.

The ‘application’ of knowledge acquired through the process of investigation – is especially important for the design research. The knowledge involved not only is based on forms of systematic inquiry that underpin the formal definitions of research– that is, ‘scientifically-robust’ knowledge claims – but also draws in all kinds of experiential, practical and ‘local’ knowledge. Master’s Engineering design research are designed to increase students’ scientific and technical knowledge in an engineering-specific field. Academic disciplines such as urban planning transport planning, infrastructure provision and management, property valuation, environmental studies, and housing provision belong to such design category. The masters programs for which design research is applicable is shown in the table annexed at the end of this policy guideline.

7.1 Organization of engineering design research thesis

Structure of design research thesis (research and design) more or less follows the following structure:

1. Introduction (introduction, background, problem statement or definition of the design research project i.e. what the research tries to resolve, purpose rationale, objectives)
2. Appropriateness of both research methods and methodology of the discipline
3. Theoretical framework (including conceptual design)
4. Context and data analysis (describing the area or the artifact in detail, data analysis, culminating on producing schedule of programme requirement)

5. Design (synthesis, details of the design work /study)
6. Summary of major findings / conclusion (replicability in other context)
7. Implementation of the project (recommended measures, implementation procedures, financial requirement, institutional/organizational arrangement, human resource requirement etc.)

The structure of the proposal can follow the structure for the master's proposal (section) considering the nature of design research.

7.2. Quality criteria for design research

Design research as the name suggests is a combination of research (a scientific research effort) and design (intuitive part). The quality criteria are also a combination of both aspects. The list of criteria includes

1. Appropriateness of methodology to the problem statement or to the definition of the design project
2. Quality of data analysis and reporting the finding
3. Based on appropriate and relevant theory i.e. soundness of the theoretical framework and soundness of the conceptual design
4. Novelty (invention) value
5. Technical feasibility (fitness of the design to the context or realization of the design in the context)
6. Economic, social, cultural and political feasibility (current and in the near future)
7. Presentation quality

7.3 Assessment of master's thesis for design research

The assessment of the Master's design research thesis often has two parts: the design exhibition and public colloquium which takes place after the discussion / questioning. The former is done in a short, closed meeting of the department committee of professional team. This technical evaluation by internal technical team has a weight of 40 % while the evaluation of the open defense of the thesis bears 60%. During the technical examination, the student has to be dismissed after giving explanation, and the assessment deliberation is performed by the university members of the Master's examining committee. External members have an advisory-vote in this case. The main focus would be the quality of the design/planning product. In the open oral thesis defense the focus is on research methods, quality of analysis.

The committee will address these main aspects and determine the strong and weak points of the student's work. This is registered by the main supervisor on the

Assessment Form Master's thesis. Subsequently the committee determines the final grade for the Master's design research thesis according to the final grading profiles. After determination of the final grade, the Master's thesis examining committee announces the final grade to the student and presents the feedback on the assessment form orally to the student at the end of the public oral defense (SGS-DRT: Form 00_).

PART IV: PH.D. DISSERTATION

8. Essence of Doctoral Research

The essence of doctoral programs is basically the development of the ability to conduct original research independently and extend the boundaries of knowledge. The hallmark of research for Doctor of Philosophy is reviewing the existing stock of knowledge and identifying current debates in the area of the research topic (thematic area) and questioning oneself what to contribute to the debate. In order to do so a PhD candidate is expected to have the following knowledge, skills, and attitude standards:

- Ability to acquire information and synthesize state of the art knowledge and be able to capture current debates in his/her specific thematic areas
- Be creative, have critical thinking capacity
- Ability to independently apply methodologies of scientific research as well as to create new knowledge
- Ability to critically analyze research findings and to understand their importance in the relevant context
- Ability to communicate in an international academic, scientific and industrial environment
- Ability to perform scholarly communication across fields
- Multi-disciplinary, multi-cultural experiences and respect diversity
- Be endowed with high standard of integrity and professionalism.
- Ability to demonstrate individual maturity, responsibility and confidence by:
 - ◆ Being able to evaluate one's own work and the work of others.
 - ◆ Accepting criticism from others, including constructive recommendations.
 - ◆ Meeting assignments and time obligations.
 - ◆ Ability to clearly communicate verbally and in writing

8.1 Quality Criteria for PhD Dissertation

Having a good dissertation proposal is a prerequisite for good Ph.D. dissertation. On the other hand starting dissertation work without a detailed proposal entails risk. The implication of the topic for career warrants care. For those who choose a research or scholarly career, failure to consider the dissertation as a part of a career plan may have serious consequences. Some of these are fitness of topic to available research methods, time required to do the proposed dissertation, matching of student capabilities and interests, attractiveness for funding (if relevant), and consistency with student career objectives. A Ph.D. research should demonstrate independent scholarly ability. It should not be just the ability to do what an advisor

says but ability to take initiative and be reasonably independent. The major set of criteria is summarized as follows:

1. Based on significant research problem statement, question, or hypothesis

The dissertation should tackle an interesting problem (that is amenable to research). It should be a work that explains, solves, or adds proof or disproof to the question, problem, or hypothesis. It should provide new or improved evidence. The dissertation makes a contribution if it adds evidence, helps resolve conflicting beliefs, or strengthen the reasoning either supporting or disproving beliefs. Being innovative and novel, the dissertation should produce *new* knowledge in that it resolves gaps, uncertainties, or controversies in the existing empirical and/or theoretical body of knowledge.

2. Methodology is appropriate for the problem and powerful enough to yield a contribution to knowledge

It should be innovative and novel, in the sense that an existing methodology is being applied in a new way or to a new question or problem area, or in the sense that a methodology is extended or modified in a significant way. The new or improved methodologies should be shown to add to knowledge. Methodology may sometimes be used as a contribution to knowledge if new methods are applied and demonstrated to be useful. Research methods which include detailed descriptions of research designs, analytic methods, measurement strategies and data should be powerful enough to support a contribution to knowledge.

3. Based on meaningful concepts or theory

A PhD dissertation should be written in a scholarly style, including thorough literature reviews and development of relevant *theoretical frameworks*. The data collection and analysis should be guided by theory. It should demonstrate mastery of theories and concepts on the area expressed in the problem statement i.e. advanced knowledge of the research field. It should demonstrate new or improved design of conceptual or physical artifact. The contribution may be demonstrated by reasoning, proof of concept, proof of value added, and proof of acceptance and use.

4. An original contribution to the body of knowledge in the specific discipline

An original contribution offers a novel or new perspective. It is publishable because it adds to knowledge, changes the way people think, informs policy, moves the field forward, or advances the state of the art. This includes the

soundness and appropriateness of the conceptual, and or theoretical, and analytical models including mathematical model. Application of new or different analytical methods is highly appreciated. The literature review should demonstrate an appropriate level of depth mastery of the major theoretical concepts. Furthermore it should contribute to the development of new or improved concepts or theories.

5. Document presentation quality:

This includes precision and clarity of title and style; presentation and writing quality; language quality; quality of illustrations and tables; choice and presentation of bibliographic references. The manuscript must respect presentation and formatting standards as set out in the guidelines.

9. Advisorship

The primary responsibility for the management of a doctoral dissertation project lies with the student. The supervisor is a facilitator, motivator or guide. The SGC/IGC/DGC normally recommends the selected thesis advisor(s) to the CGC/SGS/. The Thesis advisor(s) shall be a full-time academic unit member with the academic rank of associate professor and above for PhD. In the case of co-advising, in a special case an Assistant Professor can be assigned for PhD Dissertation, if suggested by CGC, endorsed by SGS and approved by CGS.

A person(s) outside of the University in the required area of specialization with a PhD Degree who will be able to submit a letter of commitment in advising the student and who will be in the country at least for a year or more can be assigned as an advisor. In such cases, it will be mandatory to have a co-advisor(s) from the University. In case the advisor or the supervisor misses for more than six months after starting his advising or supervising, the advisor or supervisor should be substituted by another competent advisor or supervisor. The advisor(s) will assist the student in planning the research work, monitor it regularly, advises the student on how to publish, critically evaluate the draft and final manuscripts.

10. Selection and Approval of Thesis Topic

The topic for thesis work shall be selected in consultation with, and prior approval of, the thesis advisor. The selection of thesis topic shall be on the basis of the broad needs of the public sector and/or the priority areas of research topics as determined by the concerned Academic Unit. Special provision shall be provided for self-sponsored or foreign students. The topic of the thesis of each candidate shall be approved by the SGC/IGC/DGC or CGC as early as possible as and not later than

the time of the candidate's enrollment into candidacy. Make use of Dissertation Title /Topic Approval (SGS-PhD: Form-005).

10.1 Preparation of a Research Plan

A candidate should discuss the plan for the research with the supervisor(s) prior to enrolling. Some Programmes and/or supervisors require a brief research plan to be submitted before or reasonably early in the enrolment. Where this is required it would normally include the following minimum components:

- a statement of the research topic
- a review of the literature
- a statement of research questions or hypotheses
- the methodologies by which the questions or hypotheses will be investigated;
- the forms of analysis proposed
- the resource requirements including the impact of timing of resource availability
- a timetable for the total project and thesis writing
- an ethics approval statement (where relevant).

Such a research is helpful in guiding the student in knowledge area development drill in preparation for the final proposal. The student will present the research plan during the first seminar. The student will incorporate any correction/direction rendered by supervisors and other academicians. Such a research seminar will be defended publicly in the presence of seminar supervisor and other academicians.

10.2 Research proposal

As part of the dissertation research process, candidates must first successfully develop and defend a written proposal of their dissertation research, and subsequently develop and defend the written documentation of their completed dissertation research. Doctoral students need to write a research proposal in the specified size, format and content before they start their Ph.D. dissertation. They need to recognize that one's research is good as one's proposal. Writing a meticulous proposal will help to establish the groundwork for research study. It will also help to pre-empt any problems that might be encountered during the course of writing and research.

Size of a proposal should not exceed 3000 words (6-8pages) for master's thesis and 5000 (roughly about 10-12 pages) words (excluding Bibliography) for Ph.D. dissertation proposal. Actual size is determined in consultation with the supervisor. The proposal is perused by the supervisor and co-advisor or second-supervisor.

The proposal shall contain:

- A clear and precise title
- Introduction
- Background (rationale placed within the context of existing scientific research)
- Research Problem Statement
- Conceptual and theoretical framework with relevant literature
- Research questions/hypotheses
- Refining research questions and framing “thesis statement” i.e. the main idea of your entire project or a strong statement which is a product of your own critical thinking and that you can prove with evidence
- Methodology (research paradigm, epistemological, ontological) and methods (with justification to choose certain methodology, method, research strategy, sampling and instrumentation)
- Scope of study
- Significance of the study
- Anticipated limitations/constraints (which arise from the applied methodology or method, analysis tool etc. not shortage of finance, time, and respondents’ collaboration)
- list of literature to be reviewed
- References
- Budget schedule
- Action plan
- Appendices (interview guide, questionnaires, indexes, relatively lengthy elaboration of models, analytical tool used, high resolution figures etc.),

10.3 Budget Schedule

Take the cost for the following expenses

- traveling
- accommodation
- data collectors and assistants
- secretarial services (typing, printing, duplication, photocopying, binding)
- data entry
- language editing
- publishing related

10.4 Format for proposal

A typical dissertation proposal format consists of three chapters or parts: The introduction (chapter one), the conceptual framework based on review of related theoretical literature and previous research done (chapter two) and methodology (chapter three). Look for separate guideline on the format.

10.5 Evaluation of the research proposal

A proposal defence is an oral presentation and oral examination. Before the defence a dissertation proposal has to be submitted. Ph.D. students are advised to proofread their proposals before submittal because uncorrected dissertation proposals send wrong images to your examiners.

In preparation for the dissertation proposal the student and his/her advisor have to fill the application form (Doctoral proposal/Dissertation supervisor Approval Form, SGS-PhD: Form 002) declaring that the proposal is ready for defense two weeks before the proposal defense to the Head of the Academic Unit and the abstract or summary of the proposal (3-4 pages) to the School of Graduate Studies. The respective IGC, SGC, DGC will recommend the list of nominated committee members for approval and endorsement by then IC, SC, DC or SGS. Use the request form for the constitution of examination committee (SGS-PhD: Form 003). The abstract or summary of proposal should contain the following:

- Title
- Introduction
- Background
- Review of literature (overview of significant literature published on the topic and related previous researches done)
- Research problem (what you are aiming to discover or establish)
- Research questions/objectives (what you are interested, defines what data you need and analysis method you use)
- Methods (includes the conceptual/theoretical framework, methods and techniques)
- References

The research proposal will be distributed to the examining committee at least one week before the proposal defence.

10.6 Proposal defense

Provided prior distribution of the abstract or summary of proposal and assuming that examiners should have read the summary proposal defense presentation is limited to 20 minutes. This is followed by 40 minutes question and answer session. The student has to keep the number of slides within the allocated time for proposal defence.

This is followed by Examination committee panel members challenging the merits of the proposal through questions and answers session with the student. At this stage panel members are expected to provide comments and suggestions to improve the research proposal. At the end of the oral defence panel members will deliberate and decide on the pass/fail status of the defense with the assessment recommendations.

The chairperson summarizes the panel's recommendations, comments and corrections needed.

10.7. Composition of proposal defence panel

- a) The examining panel consists of three persons: two faculties with academic rank of associate professor. One of the examiners being external and the other internal as recommended by department and approved by the SGS and one of them shall be appointed as chairperson.
- b) the supervisor and co-supervisor (they neither mark nor answer questions)
- c) PhD Program coordinator or other members of the faculty/institute who would like to participate.

11. Ph.D. Dissertation Defense

11.1. Pre defense seminar

Once the dissertation is completed, the candidate will present pre-submission seminar prior to the submission of her/his final research/dissertation. A PhD student has to submit her/his draft manuscript two months (a minimum of one month) before the pre-submission seminar which would be held six months before Viva voce (final defense).

11.2. Dissertation submittal for defense

A candidate whose course work or qualifying examination is incomplete is not entitled to process defense arrangement and procedures. A candidate, after conferring with the advisor, shall give notice of readiness to submit a dissertation. A candidate should obtain written approval from supervisor to submit thesis for defence. (See SGS-PhD: Form 002).

Once submitted, the dissertation defence process has begun. On the basis of positive opinion of from at least two examiners that satisfies the thesis as standard and justified for oral examination, the CGC/SGC/IGC/DGC in consultation with SGS shall arrange an oral examination for the candidate to defend her/his dissertation.

On the basis of the negative opinions at least from two examiners that do not satisfy the thesis as standard, the examination committee shall decide either to reject the thesis or may recommend to the academic /graduate council to allow the researcher to resubmit the thesis after necessary revision and modification as suggested by the examiners within six months from the date of approval of by the academic/graduate

council. The examination committee shall report their decision to CGC/SGC/IGC/DGC. Refer to the Ordinance for PhD Programs (SGS 2017).

In case the researcher is unable to satisfy the oral examination even the thesis is adjudged adequate, the examination committee through Program coordinator may recommend to the academic/graduate committee that the researcher may be permitted to appear at another oral examination after a time period of six months from the date of first oral examination.

No researcher shall be allowed to appear at the oral examination for the same thesis more than twice.

A candidate whose course work or qualifying examination is incomplete is not entitled to process defence arrangement and procedures.

11.3. Plagiarism test

Plagiarism test must be conducted on the dissertation before its submission. Honesty is the keystone to academic work. The strength of your presentation and contribution are worthless if you plagiarize or misuse data. A student standing may be revoked for any student who commits plagiarism or fraud, and a degree may be revoked if such plagiarism or fraud is discovered after the degree is obtained. Plagiarism is regarded as a serious offence, and you need to make sure that you do not, even accidentally, commit plagiarism.

11.4. Copies to be submitted in preparation for defence

A doctoral candidate must submit three paper copies and the electronic version. A PDF version is required but, the candidate may also supply an editable version that examiners may find more convenient to annotate with comments.

Upon initial submission of a dissertation to the department, the DGC/IGC/SGC in consultation with the students supervisor, appoints an examining Committee. The DGC/IGC/SGC forwards the committee's evaluation form to the department (SGS-PhD: Form 003). This form lists the name and address of the external examiner and the preferred date and time for the oral examination. The Department forwards the committee evaluation form to DC/IC/SC and SGS for approval and proceeds to appoint the examiners after securing the approval.

The external examiner should be notified in good time and obtain a copy of the dissertation of the candidate at least **six weeks** before the date set for the defense. External examiners are required to submit a two page report to the department before the defence date. The dissertation must be presented to all the members of the examining board at least three weeks before the scheduled defence date. Formal

letters of invitation are sent by the department head/chair to all examiners on behalf of the DGC

Within one week after the thesis delivered (two weeks before the defence date) any Thesis examining board member may request a pre-defence meeting if in the opinion of the member, the dissertation is not defensible.

11.5. Copy to SGS

A copy of Ph.D. dissertation (both hard and soft copy) must be submitted to SGS for record in PhD University (country) directory and for attestation of the Ph.D. degree by the SGS in the future.

11.6. Composition of the examining committee and members' roles

The supervisor will send a proposal of examination board to the respective SGC/IGC/DGC or CGC which shall appoint the Examining Board and select the external examiner. The Examination Board shall have a minimum of three and a maximum of five members consisting of at least one member of the University: the supervisor her/himself, one external examiner from public universities in Ethiopia' and one external examiner from Universities in Regional States. Normally, one external examiner is required except in situations where the nature of the thesis work requires more than one external examiner. Unless and otherwise the research area of the candidate is interdisciplinary in which case more than two examiners are required to form an academic judgment, normally one internal examiner and one external examiner are considered sufficient in reaching academic judgment. There shall be one alternative against each examiner except for the supervisor.

At least two months prior to the scheduled defence date, a complete thesis examining board form must be submitted to the School of Graduate Studies. The form should be accompanied with curriculum vitae and shall state:

- ✓ the title of the dissertation
- ✓ the members of the examining board (signature of committee chair required)
- ✓ the date which the defence will be held (defence announcement)
- ✓ the date at which the mandatory pre-defence seminar was carried
- ✓ the signatures of the appropriate department head and the supervisor
- ✓ the abstract of the dissertation
- ✓ a list of publication (in case the candidate has published)

The SGC/IGC/DGC selects external examiners and recommends to the CGC/SGS. The SGS approves and appointment is made by the head of the Academic Unit. The

program seeking the appointment for an external examiner should submit to the SGS the biographical data, including academic achievements, publications, and experience as external examiner of the nominee.

The SGS in approving the nomination of an external examiner ascertains that the nominee is having the quality of seniority and experience with an academic rank of at least an associate professor (or equivalent) for PhD dissertation defense. Exceptions shall be approved on a case by case basis. Other qualities of the external examiner need to be referred to the University Legislation (Article 157).

The SGS or the Council of Graduate Study (CGS) will approve the examination committee for each candidate and circulate the same. Once the thesis examining board has been approved by the School of Graduate Studies or Council of Graduate Studies (CGS), the thesis examining board has fully authority to recommend the award of the Ph. D. to the Academic Unit. All subsequent changes in the committee must be approved by the School of Graduate Studies.

An examiner evaluates a dissertation by filling a form (SGS-PhD: Form-00_). Examiner reports and marking forms must be submitted to the PhD Program Department at least one day before the viva voce.

12. Viva Voce

The viva (an oral examination for academic qualification) will be held in public session during the University teaching term. Defence examinations should be held at a venue that reflects the formality of the occasion (e.g. Faculty Conference, Hall). *Viva voce* examinations is chaired by a member of academic staff (including those with honorary appointments) of the ECSU independent of the student presenting the thesis and the examiners.

The presence of an independent chair is designed to ensure that the viva voce examination is conducted in a fair and ordered manner. It is a protection mechanism for both student and examiners in the event of subsequent allegations of misconduct or bias on behalf of the examiners.

12.1. Role and duties of the Chairperson

The role of the chair is basically to ensure that the viva is conducted in a professional manner and that each examiner has the opportunity to ask questions. The chair should also ensure that the length of the exam is appropriate. A typical exam period will take 90-120 minutes. Role of the chairperson includes but not limited to chairing the preliminary meeting of the examiners, including agreeing a structure and format

for the viva, including the roles of the examiners. Among the duties of the chairperson include:

- Introducing all those present at the viva voce examination, including attempting to put all parties at their ease
- Ensuring that all those present understand the procedures to be followed.

(All persons attending the defence should turn off their mobile phones and any other audiovisual device they may have in their possession which may cause a distraction to the candidate, board of examiners, or members of the public. Only the examiners will be entitled to use a laptop or other electronic device to follow the candidate's presentation and subsequent question and answer session with the Board)

- Outlining the structure and format of the viva voce to all those present
- Intervening in the examining process only if there appears to be bias, misconduct, unfairness or if the examiners are diverting from the agreed format of the viva in such a manner as to disadvantage the student, or if the chair believes the viva is progressing in manner which could compromise academic standards. Actions which might be taken include calling a temporary halt to the meeting, holding a private discussion with the examiners or the candidate, or, most exceptionally, ending the examination.
- Chairing the post-viva discussion of the examiners and assisting them in the formulation of a recommendation.
- Ensuring that the examiners complete and sign the relevant forms at the end of the viva.
- Ensure that the recommendation of the examiners is conveyed to the student in a professional manner and make sure the student is clear as to what may be required of them, and that the student understands that s/he will receive a formal letter from the examining board detailing the recommendation of the examiners.
- Providing information for any subsequent appeal procedure.

12.2 Secretary of the board of examiners

The Secretary of the Board of Examiners will be responsible for all administrative aspects of the oral examination: preparation, completion and submission of documentation relating to the examination (including list of signatures), oversight of formal aspects of the examination, calling the candidate into the room, etc.

12.3. External Examiners

The purpose of having external examiners is to ensure that degrees awarded in similar subjects at the University are comparable in standard with those awarded by other universities, and secondly, that the assessment system is fair. Therefore an external examiner in general must be external to the University.

The main function of the external examiner is to serve as a member of the Board of examiners and to have a determining role in examining and deciding the fate of the thesis. The external examiner shall also comment and give advice on course content, balance and structure.

12.4 Participation in Assessment Procedures

Members of the public should not speak or participate in any way during the defence examination; only PhD members of the public will be entitled to participate, if called upon to do so by the Chair of the board of examiners. As and when appropriate, the Chair may call on PhD members of the public (including thesis supervisors) to make whatever contribution to the proceedings they see fit.

13. Procedure for the dissertation defense

13.1. Pre-defence meeting of the examining board

Before the commencement of the defence [the candidate should be excused if already in the examination hall] the chair/supervisor will provide a profile of the candidate's background, course work, and publication record.

Examining board members will then determine how the thesis defence will be conducted for example if any one of the members expresses a serious concern with the content of the thesis, a strategy has to be developed whereby the questioning can address these concerns in a constructive manner

The defence starts with a presentation of 30 minutes (a maximum of 45 minutes). The Candidate should not be interrupted during their presentation, unless the Chair deems it necessary or appropriate to do so. Then the chairperson of the examining board invites the external examiner to commence the questioning period.

Examiners will be allowed a 10 minute question period in turn, with the opportunity to have a second round of questioning. Alternatively, questions will be permitted to follow logically from the initial set of questions. At the end of the discussion session between the candidate and the examination board, the Chair will ask the candidate and public to step outside while the examiners deliberate.

Following this period of deliberation, the examiners will come to a decision regarding the qualification to be awarded. Once the necessary documentation has been completed by all members of the board, the Secretary will ask the candidate to return (with or without the members of the public). The members of the board will remain seated.

Once the candidate and members of the public have taken their seats again, the members of the board will rise and the Chair will announce the qualification decided by the examiners, which may be: fail, pass, very good or excellent.

The Chair will make no reference of any kind to the board's decision in relation to the award of *cum laude* distinction. If the PhD is awarded with an overall classification of 'excellent', the dissertation may be considered for *cum laude* distinction, if so recommended by unanimous secret vote by the examiners. Votes recommending *cum laude* distinction will be counted at the PhD Office at a later date.

The Chair will then draw the proceedings to a close. The examining board decision is confidential and decision is determined by majority vote decision vote might constitute one of the following:

A dissertation is **accepted**

- a) "Accepted with no changes," or
- b) "Accepted with minor changes" to be made to the satisfaction of the supervisor, or
- c) "Accepted with major modification" to be made to the satisfaction of the external examiner and the rest of the Board of Examiners. Under certain circumstances, the external examiner may delegate the Board of examiners, or
- d) If a thesis/dissertation requires substantial changes in substance, which are to be made to the satisfaction of members of the examining Board or its designate, the examining Board's report shall include a brief outline of the nature of the changes required and indicate the time by which the changes are to be completed.

A thesis shall be **rejected** if;

- a) The work does not meet the required standards set by the University; or
- b) The work is plagiarized as judged by the examining Board; or
- c) The work has been already used to confer a degree from this or another University. However, this shall not preclude the candidate from submitting such work provided enough extra work has been done to expand the scope and depth of the subject.

Thesis will be examined by all three members of the examination committee. After examination of the thesis, all three examiners shall send their reports in sealed envelope to the chairman of the examination board (SGS-PhD: Form 00_). Upon completion of the examination, the members of the committee will sign the form

(SGS-PhD: Form 00_). The signature of the members of the Board of examiners shall be required as evidence of their decision on the student's thesis work. The chair will return the completed form immediately to the graduate department / SGS.

13.2. The views of the external examiner

The views of an external examiner are particularly decisive in the case of disagreement on the evaluation/rating of a particular unit of assessment. External examiners are encouraged to comment on the assessment process and the schemes for marking.

Academic Units shall use the opportunities created by the visits of external examiners to discuss the structure and content of the course and of the graduate program and the assessment procedures. Any comments or suggestions made by the external examiners shall be discussed by the academic unit and decisions shall be made whether or not to accept the comments.

External examiners may make written confidential reports to the academic unit head at the end of their visits. They are free to make any comments they wish, including observation on teaching and course structure and content. The head shall instruct the SGC/IGC/DGC to take action with respect to the comments. The head has the responsibility to see to it that the recommendations are considered and the proper measures are taken.

13.2. Dissertation Evaluation and Rating

In a PhD dissertation, the supervisor and co-supervisor cannot interfere and defend the candidate. However, the supervisor can explain in exceptional circumstances.

Dissertation Grading Scale:

Rank	(%)*
Excellent	≥ 85
Very Good	$75 \leq X < 85$
Good	$60 \leq X < 75$
Satisfactory	$50 \leq X < 60$
Fail	< 50

* *Evaluation weight (%) = 0.50 x External examiner's + 0.35 x Internal examiner's + 0.15 x Chairperson*

Excellent (85-100)

A thesis rated 'excellent' ought to be an original contribution to knowledge. This does not mean that it must explore a 'new' or little studied problem. An original contribution to knowledge can also result from a novel and perceptive reassessment of familiar question. The thesis should be exemplary both in the selection of problems and data for consideration and in the manner by which conclusions are drawn about the problems. If based upon empirical data, the thesis graded 'excellent' should report the data clearly and completely. The conclusions drawn from the data should be persuasive. The reader of a work rated 'excellent' should conclude that he or she knows something new about the problem. The student has shown an excellent grasp of the subject matter, very good analysis thereof and a vision thereon related to the theoretical and/or methodical and/or social aspects of the discipline. There is evidence of excellent perception of the own stance within the field of research. The study is an example of excellent interpretative abilities (including interdisciplinary awareness); the results are a genuine contribution to knowledge and conceptualization in the discipline.

Very good (75-84)

A thesis rated 'very good' should demonstrate a mature and sustained critical engagement with the theoretical and practical context of the work. The research should show very high familiarity with the literature in the area of study. The work should also reflect an in-depth integration of research data and a student's personal contributions. The analysis and interpretation parts of the thesis should demonstrate a clear understanding of the issues and critical judgment. The thesis ought to be well organized, written, and proofread - with very few errors tolerated. A good degree of (self-) reflection is important for good research (what is the value of the conclusions, how are the data studied in relation to other phenomena in the problem area: feedback to the problem statement).

Good (65-74)

A Thesis rated 'good' need not be a contribution to knowledge, but should show sound judgment, a substantial amount of work, clarity of thought and presentation, and some creativity. The writer of a thesis with 'good' pass need only demonstrate that he or she has thought intelligently and carefully about a problem and presented those thoughts clearly and persuasively. If the thesis is an empirical one, the research design should be sound and the data judiciously interpreted, although slight flaws in design or analysis may occur. The thesis ought to be well organized, written, and proofread - with occasional errors tolerated.

Satisfactory (50-64)

A thesis rated 'satisfactory' has to demonstrate some understanding of debates and issues appropriate to the area of study. While a thesis with 'satisfactory' pass should be deficient in no major way, it may be weak in selection of the problem, manner of presentation, research design and analysis, or interpretation and conclusions. The deficiency in a thesis with satisfactory pass may be one of these areas or to a lesser degree in a number of them. A 'satisfactory' pass student is able, when provoked, to offer limited critical reflection.

Fall (below 50)

There is no reason why a student should automatically pass an oral exam just because he or she has written a thesis. A thesis should be rated according to its merits. Poor ones should receive poor ratings. A thesis rated 'fail' shows minimal industry, deficient understanding of the subject discussed, poor presentation, and insufficient familiarity with the relevant literature.

13.3 Incorporating comments and Making corrections

Unless specified otherwise by the committee all deficiencies for "Accepted with major modification" must be corrected within a date of two months on/from the date of the examination

The revised thesis must be submitted to the chair of the examining board three weeks prior to the final dateline. If the deficiencies are not corrected to the satisfaction of the designated committee, or not completed within two months deadline, the grade of conditional pass will be changed to "**fail**"

13.4 Completion of all requirements after successful thesis defense

Five copies of the final corrected dissertation, printed on good quality paper including signature of the candidate and his supervisor and co-supervisor should be submitted to the department. The department should send one copy for the SGS for university doctoral theses documentation. No diploma would be issued for candidates who failed to do so. The remaining copies are to be distributed as follows:

- a bound copy for the supervisor
- a bound copy for the candidate home department
- a bound copy to the student
- a bound copy for the central library
- unbound copy for microfilming

The following might be necessary to complete the publication: A signed and completed Doctoral Dissertation Publishing Agreement Form for microfilming and copyrighting of the dissertation, written permission from the copy right holders if copyright material by the candidate or other authors is included in the dissertation.

The following must be submitted to the Registrar [Graduate Division Office] as the case might necessitate:

- ▶ The Ph.D. Diploma Form indicating the students full name as it should appear on the Ph.D. Diploma
- ▶ A copy of the signed thesis title page with all signatures present
- ▶ A signed and completed survey of Earned Doctorates Form
- ▶ The Ph.D. Alumni Survey providing forwarding address and a description of the student's next professional position
- ▶ The Graduate Student Publications and Awards Form which is to list all publications including all published papers and manuscripts in preparation

ANNEX 1: Dissertation formats

There are two formats accepted by the School of Graduate Studies. Students must discuss with their supervisor the Dissertation format acceptable in their department:

- **The traditional monograph organization of a Dissertation**
A dissertation format provides an appropriate vehicle for experimental details that might be omitted from journal articles due to space limitations
- **compilation of research articles: each chapter corresponding to a published (or in preparation) journal article**
The format chosen should be maintained throughout the dissertation.

FORMAT A: The compilation of traditional monograph format

The monograph format is a traditional simple dissertation format and presents a monograph or single study or a group of related studies (as compared to the traditional complex format which presents several studies each presenting its own introduction, methods , results and conclusion) has typically five chapters: introduction, literature review, methodology, results and conclusion.

The comprehensive dissertation begins with scholarly introduction (chapter one). This is followed by the literature review (chapter two), then the methodology part (chapter three, including the research paradigm i.e. the epistemological and ontological aspects, the research strategy and instrumentation among others), results and discussion (Chapter four) and conclusion (chapter five).

FORMAT B: The compilation of research articles format

The School of Graduate Studies doesn't set a requirement for a specific number of published manuscripts. Some of the works might also be published later following the defence. Publishability is a necessary condition for Ph.D. research. However the fact that a paper has been published in a peer-reviewed publication does not necessarily make it acceptable for the dissertation. Each paper must be an empirical research paper that includes a valid research design, valid data, and appropriate analytic methods of sufficient rigor as deemed by Academic Unit Graduate Committee. . The following concerns should be addressed:

- With this formula, the thesis or dissertation can include one or more articles that have been published or submitted for publication in peer-reviewed journals recognized in the field.
- Candidates must have written the article(s) during their studies under the supervision of their research supervisor. Candidates must be the principal author (or first author) of these articles. Following an agreement with their

research supervisor, the candidate may submit a request to submit a thesis or dissertation by articles. PhD program Graduate Committee using the Presentation of a Thesis or Dissertation by Articles form (SGS-PhD: Form 00_)

- Students must also include the acknowledgements of receipt for the articles they have submitted and for those which have been accepted and which will be included in the thesis or dissertation. This form and the other documents must be sent to the department and the School of Graduate Studies before submitting to thesis or dissertation examination committee members.
- At least three publishable, empirical research papers related to the specialization of the doctoral students are required.
- The doctoral student must qualify as first author for journals where first authorship indicates primary responsibility for the paper
- A faculty advisor should be a co-author only if he or she contributes substantially to the development of the research design, measurement and data collection, and/or analytical methodology for the paper or chapter.
- If the faculty member is primarily responsible for the research design, data and methodology, then it follows the paper does not qualify as independent work by the doctoral student.
- Each paper must be an empirical research paper that includes a valid research design, valid data, and appropriate analytic methods of sufficient rigor as deemed by the student's dissertation committee
- It is highly recommended at least two of the three papers be related, either by content or methodology (however this is left to the discretion of graduate committee of the Academic unit)
- A collection of published papers cannot be submitted in place of a Dissertation. Moreover review articles, research design articles, and purely theoretical or conceptual articles generally will not count toward one the three required dissertation papers.
- Material such as literature reviews, theoretical frameworks, detailed description of analytic methods and data—which may be excluded from published versions of papers due to page constraints—must be included in the dissertation, possibly as appendices or as separate background papers
- The dissertation must include an overview summarizing the papers. It must also contain material that describes, in non-technical terms; the implications of the papers' findings for the real world societal development and management issues as well as directions for future research that are suggested by the papers' findings and/or limitations.
- This material may be incorporated into the individual papers (e.g., in discussion sections), or in a separate concluding section of the dissertation.

The body of the thesis should be in the form of manuscripts that have been submitted for a scholarly journal. The format and style requirements described in the dissertation format must be adhered to for each and every chapter. Each manuscript

will constitute a chapter and will include a brief introduction, methods, results and discussion. A footnote to the introduction must give bibliographic information for manuscript constituting the chapter. The information should include: the full name of the authors, institutional affiliation, the journal and the status of the manuscript.

If the student is not the first author of a manuscript that is to be presented in the dissertation; one of the following options might be applied:

1. the student may extract his or her work from the manuscript for presentation in the dissertation
2. the manuscript may be included as an appendix to the dissertation.
3. the manuscript might be included as a chapter if the student was responsible for the preparation of a significant portion of the manuscript.

For all multi-authored manuscripts, the exact contribution of the student should be stated in an introductory statement or footnote preceding each chapter or in the appendix. If figures from a multi-author manuscript are used, it is imperative to indicate which figures are the student's works. In all cases in which figures are used, appropriate acknowledgment must be given. Wherever pertinent, coworkers and other contributors should be acknowledged in the body of the text.

A dissertation should end with a conclusion as a general discussion of the studies that have been conducted including arguments of interpretation, evaluation of materials included in appendices, and a way forward a plan for resolution of unanswered questions.

Co-authors

In the case of an article with several authors, students must specify certain elements in the Submission of a Thesis or Dissertation (SGS-PhD – Form:) to show who the article's principal author is:

- Estimated percentage of their contribution to the article
- Status in the research team
- Nature of their actual contribution to the article in regard to the content.

The co-authors must attest that the student is the principal author and permit the student to use the article in their thesis or dissertation. Only the dissertation supervisor and co-supervisor may be both dissertation defence committee members and co-authors of an article included in the dissertation. The other committee members may not be co-authors of articles incorporated into the dissertation.

Copyright on an article published by a publisher

If students wish to include in their thesis or dissertation an article they have published in a scientific journal, they must obtain written permission from the journal

publisher. In general, publishers allow online auto-archiving, specifying the directives to follow in order to respect copyright, but some publishers still ask that authors cede their economic rights. In the first case, students are invited to read their publishing contracts to find out about the journal publisher's copyright and auto-archiving rules as well as the procedures to follow to obtain permission to reproduce.

Common features of both formats

Both formats should contain: title page, table of contents, list of abbreviations, acknowledgments, abstract, the main body text, references, supplementary materials and methods, and appendix. It is appropriate for a more extensive presentation of materials and methods to be given in the appendix where it might be helpful for other investigators who wish to utilize procedures developed by the candidate.

At the bottom of the inside title page the following statement should be included:

“submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Philosophy in _____, in the Graduate Program of the College of _____ in the Ethiopian Civil Service University, Addis Ababa (date)”

Abstract of the dissertation is to include: a hypothesis/research problem statement/main research question, the methodology followed, the significant results and the general conclusions. The length of the abstract should not exceed 600 words with key words not more than five at the bottom. The table of contents is to be followed by separate page listings for tables, figures and illustrations.

The format for the references in the reference list should follow that in the suggested manual of style. at a minimum, each reference must include the names of all authors, year of publication, the title, (in the case of a journal article the name of the journal, the volume and number of an pages of the article) publisher, city, country. The list may be compiled for each chapter separately or together at the end of the dissertation at the discretion of the supervisor and the student.

The appendix may include but is not limited to:

- published papers – reprints, and or submitted manuscripts
- drafts manuscripts expected to be submitted shortly
- high resolution figures
- computer programs/ procedures

ANNEX 2: VARIOUS FORMS



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ADVISORS' APPROVAL SHEET (SGS-MT: Form 001)

College of _____

Department/School/Institute _____

This is to certify that the thesis entitled

” _____

Submitted in the partial fulfillment for the requirement for the degree of Masters ‘with specialization in _____

in the Graduate Program of _____

and has been carried out by (Name of student) _____

ID No. _____ under my/our supervision.

Therefore I/we recommend that the student has fulfilled the requirements and hence here by can submit the thesis to the Academic Unit,

Name of advisor:

Signature:

Date:



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Doctoral proposal/Dissertation supervisor Approval Form

(SGS-PhD: Form 002)

Student Information

Student name:: _____

Student ID # _____

Quarter/year Graduation: _____

Name of PhD program: _____

Dissertation Title: _____

Advisor/supervisor Name: _____

Student Agreement

I certify that I have examined the final copy of the above student's doctoral research proposal/ dissertation and have found that it is complete and satisfactory in all respects, and that any and all revisions required by have been made. Accordingly, I approved his/her Proposal/dissertation for oral defense and examination.

Signature of Advisor/ supervisor: _____

Date _____



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REQUEST FOR THE CONSTITUTION OF EXAMINATION COMMITTEE
(SGS-PhD: Form 003)

TO:

We hereby declare that the following external examiner and internal examiners have been approached and agreed to take part in the examination and oral defence of the dissertation here under stated. We kindly seek your approval.

Name of Candidate:	ID #:	Department:	
Dissertation Title:			
Name of supervisor:			
Name of Co-supervisor:			
Suggested external and internal examiners	Cell Phone No.	E-Mail	Will attend oral examination (Yes/No)
(External Examiner1			
(External Examiner2			
(External Examiner3			
(External Examiners4			
Internal examiner 1			
Internal examiner 2			
Others			
Proposed Date of Oral Examination :			
Proposed Venue of Oral Examination :			
Attached here with please find the biographical data including academic achievements, publications and experience of the external examiners and also the abstract of the thesis. <i>Signature of advisor/supervisor</i> _____ <i>Signature of department head</i> _____			



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Master Thesis Evaluation Form- SGS-MT: Form-004

[College /Institute/ school/ center]

Name of candidate _____ ID Number _____

Thesis Title _____

Master Program _____

Department _____

No.	Criteria	Weight	marks
1.	Part 1. Content	75%	
1.1	Title clear, concise and fully reflects the content thereof	5	
1.2	Introduction: motivation, focus and purpose (rationale), sufficient description of context (background)	5	
1.3	Clarity and alignment of problem statement, research questions/hypotheses	5	
1.4	Alignment of research approach, methods, strategy, instrumentation with problem statement	5	
1.5	Knowledge of the relevant literature, familiarity with the main concepts and theories	10	
1.6	Operationalization: clear identification of research variables, data type and data sources, research population, sampling	10	
1.7	Data presentation, application of statistical methods, valid and reliable data analysis techniques and connectivity to findings	10	
1.8	Quality of argumentation, interpretation and discussion of results	10	
1.9	Conclusion by way of answering research questions/results of hypotheses testing	10	
1.10	Prioritized practical recommendations & way forward	5	
2.	Part 2. Form	10%	
2.1	Cover title, names, dates, adherence to format (font, spacing, margins etc.)	2	
2.2	Clarity and quality of text language: spelling, punctuation, grammar	4	
2.3	Use of table, figures and illustrations	2	
2.4	Citations, in-text referencing and appropriate referencing style	2	
3.	Part 3: Presentation	15%	
3.1	Structure of the presentation and use of visual means	2.5	
3.2	Verbal communication, content and argumentation	5	
3.3	Time management	2.5	
3.4	Response to questions	5	
	Total (100%)		



Master Thesis Evaluation Form: SGS-MT-004

Summary

Component	External examiner	Internal examiner	chairperson	Total mark (100%)
Part 1+Part 2 + part 3 = (100%)	(*50%) =	(*35%) =		
Part 3 (100%)			(*15%) =	
Total (100%)				

Rating

	Rank	`(%)*
1	Excellent	≥ 85
2	Very good	$75 \leq X < 85$
3	Good	$60 \leq X < 75$
4	Satisfactory	$50 \leq X < 60$
5	Fail	< 50

Comments and Suggestions of Board of Examiners

Examiners Name :

Signature :

Date:

Approval Signature

External examiner's Name _____ Signature _____ Date _____

Internal examiner's Name _____ Signature _____ Date _____

Chairperson's Name _____ Signature _____ Date _____



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Dissertation Title /Topic Approval (SGS-PhD: Form-005)

This form is to be accompanied by a two page typewritten description of the proposed research, including, topic/title, problem statement and purpose of the study.

To the student: Submit a signed copy of this form to PhD Program academic unit before you begin work on your proposal. The academic unit will not accept this form until they have read and approved by your advisor. The academic unit forwards with its comment to the respective Graduate Committee. The Graduate Committee gives decision on the approval, modification or rejection decision.

Student Name: _____ **ID#** _____

Student signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Dissertation Title/Topic:
 : _____

Supervisor

I Have examined the attached Ph.D .Dissertation Title, problem statement and purpose of the study with respect to both content and style/format. In my judgment, the presented topic is researchable, manageable, attainable, and worthy to do it. I hereby certify that it is a good topic to be researched.

Advisor Name	Signature	Date

Head Academic Unit (name)	signature	Date

Graduate committee decision:

_____	_____	_____
Committee Member (name)	Signature	Date
_____	_____	_____
Committee Member (name)	Signature	Date
_____	_____	_____
Chairperson Graduate Committee (name)	Signature	Date



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MONTHLY PHD PROGRESS REPORT FORM (SGS-PhD: Form006)

This form is the means by which progress in PhD studies is periodically assessed by the Candidate and Supervisor, and reported to the respective academic unit the PhD program belongs via the PhD Program coordinator. It is a means by which any problems or issues may be identified and appropriate action determined. The academic units with PhD program use this form to monitor candidate's progress and ensure that supervision is effective. The regular submission of progress reports is an enrolment requirement for the next phase.

This form has three parts

PART A: Progress Report-to be completed by the Candidate

PART B: Comments to be completed by the Supervisor

PART C: Recommendations and Signatures-to-be completed by the Candidate:

and the head of the academic unit

PART A: Progress Report-to be completed by the Candidate

Name: _____ ID# _____

Specialization: _____

Supervisor: _____

Month/year _____

1. Outline below your progress and achievements over the last month. Indicate what milestones have been achieved, including detailing what chapters or sections of your thesis have been written in draft or final form.

2. Outline below your research plan for the next month; indicate what milestones have been set for the next month, including detailing what chapters or sections of your thesis you plan to write I the period.

3. I rate the quality of my work as:

Very Good Good Satisfactory Below Satisfactory

If (Below Satisfactory), what measures have you taken to address this?

4. I assess my rate of Progress as:

Very Good Good Satisfactory Below Satisfactory

If (Below Satisfactory), what measures have you taken to address this?

5. In the previous month, I have:

5.1 Given a departmental seminar Yes No

If yes, please give details:

5.2 Attended a conference(s) Yes No

If yes, please give details

5.3 Given a presentation(s) based on my research: Yes No

If yes, please give details:

5.4 Had research output(s) published (e.g. Journal articles; book chapters; conference proceedings, creative works) Yes No

If yes, please give details

6. I have submitted work to my Supervisor Yes No

If yes, please give details:

7. I have received written feedback from my supervisor Yes No

If yes, please give details

8. I have resource issues concerning my research: Yes No

9. Ethical approval for my research: Has been obtained is pending

is not required

10. Contact with my Supervisor could be improved: Yes No

If yes, please give details

11. Please provide details below of the ways that you think your Supervisor could improve his/her support of your studies:

12. Do you have any concern with your English Language skills? (e.g. reading, writing, speaking, and listening) in respect to your PhD work?

Yes No

13. Are there any issues that the academic unit to which your PhD program belong should be aware of Yes No

If yes, please give details

PLEASE NOW FORWARD THE FORM TO YOUR SUPERVISOR

PART B: SUPERVIOR COMMENTS

14. Please provide comments on the Candidate's progress and achievements in the last one month

15. Please provide comments on the Candidate's thesis goals and milestones in the last one month.

16. The quality of the Candidate's work is:

Very Good Good Satisfactory Below Satisfactory

If (Below Satisfactory), what measures have you taken to address this?

17. How often and by what means do the Supervisor and the Candidate maintain contact? Detail the means of contact (e.g. face-to-face, email, Skype) and the frequency of each:

18. Do you have any concern about the Candidate's English Language skills (e.g reading, writing, speaking and listening) In respect to his/her PhD work?

Yes No

19. If yes please describe these concerns and indicate whether you have offered support or advice to the Candidate and/or directed him/her to support services (e.g Learning Skills Center).

PART C: RECOMMENDATIONS AND SIGNATURES.

I recommend that the Candidate's enrolment be:

Continued Continued subjected to specified conditions as outlined below

If (Continued subjected to specified conditions), Please indicate the specific conditions

: _____

I have discussed my comments with the Candidate: Yes No

Please outline any issues that emerged from the discussion with the Candidate:

Supervisors Signature: _____ Date _____

PLEASE NOW RETURN FORM TO THE CANDIDATE

To be completed by candidate

If you like to make any comments in response to the comments made by your Supervisor, please so below

I have discussed this progress report with my supervisor: Yes No

Please outline any issues that emerged from the discussion with your Supervisor(s):

Candidate's signature: _____
Date _____

PLEASE NOW FORWARD THE FORM TO THE GRADUATE PROGRAM ACADEMIC UNIT

Acting on behalf of the graduate program academic unit, I have resolved that this progress report be

Approved Declined

I resolve the candidate's enrollment be:

Continued Continued subject to specified conditions as outlined below
 Terminated

Head of graduate program academic unit Signature _____ Date: _____

ANNEX 3: List of acronyms

AC	Academic Commission
AVP	Academic Vice President
ASAC	Academic Staff Affairs Committee
CASC	Curriculum and Academic Standards Committee
CEP	Continuing Education Program
CGC	College Graduate Committee
CGS	Council of Graduate Studies
DAC	Doctoral Advisory Committee
DASQAC	Department Academic Standards and Quality Assurance Committee
DC	Department Council
DGC	Department Graduate Committees
IC	Institute council
SC	School Council
SGC	School Graduate Committee
CASC	Curriculum and Academic Standards Committee
SEC	Senate Executive Committee
SDC	Student Discipline Committee

ANNEX 4: ECSU- List of Graduate Study Programs and Types of Recommended Culmination Works

College	Department/institute/school	Master program	Culmination works - masters level			PhD	Culmination works PhD
			Capstone projects	Engineering Design Research	Empirical Research		Dissertation
CFMD	Dept. of public and social security management	Public management	✓		✓	Public management	✓
		Social security management	✓		✓		
	Department of Development Economics	Development economics	✓		✓		
	Department of public financial management & accounting	Public financial management	✓		✓	Public financial management	✓
		Accounting and finance	✓		✓		
	Department of tax and customs	Customs administration	✓		✓		
		Tax administration	✓		✓		
Department of procurement and asset management	Procurement and asset management	✓		✓			
CUDE	Department of urban planning and development	Urban planning and development	✓	✓		Urban planning and development	✓
	Department of urban infrastructure and transport management	Urban transport planning and management	✓	✓		Urban and Regional studies	✓
		Urban infrastructure provision and management	✓	✓		Urban Mobility, infrastructure planning & management	✓
	Department of urban land development and management	Urban management (MA)	✓		✓		
		Urban land development and management	✓	✓	✓		
	Department of Housing and real estate	Housing provision and management	✓	✓	✓		

	management	Property valuation and asset management	✓	✓				
	Department/institute/school	Master program	Capstone project	Design research	Empirical Research policiy implication/ Management	PhD	Dissertation	
	Department of environment and climate change	Environement and climate change management	✓	✓		Environment and Resilience managment	✓	
CLG	Institute of leadership and good governance	Leadership and good governance	✓		✓			
	School of Diplomacy and International relations	Diplomacy and International relations	✓		✓			
	African Institute of Governanace and development	Governence and development	✓		✓			
	School of policy studies	Public policy studies		✓		✓		
		Social policy		✓		✓		
		Development policy		✓		✓		
		Policy analysis		✓		✓		
	School of law and federalism	Federalism and intergovernmental relations		✓		✓		
		Comparative public law and governance (LLM)		✓		✓		
		International law (LLM)		✓		✓		