



## **FACULTY OF THEOLOGY**

### **GUIDELINES FOR THE EVALUATION OF A DISSERTATION OR A THESIS**

For the purposes of examining dissertations and theses your attention is drawn to the following general and specific guidelines:

#### **1. General guidelines**

##### **Requirements for a dissertation or mini-dissertations**

A dissertation or mini-dissertation must provide proof that the student is familiar with the method of research.

As with technical requirements, a dissertation or mini-dissertation must comply with all the requirements set by the faculty.

##### **Requirements for a thesis**

A thesis must make a distinct contribution to the knowledge of, and insight into a subject field and produce proof of originality, either by the revelation of new facts or by the exercising of an independent critical capacity.

The editing of a thesis must be satisfactory and comply with the requirements laid down by the faculty in this regard.

#### **2. Examination**

Specific guidelines for the examination of the dissertation and thesis appear in the attached examiner's report.

At the end of the examiner's report, you must select one of 5 recommendation options, based on your overall assessment.

- If you recommend that the dissertation or thesis be accepted unconditionally (option 1), the examiner's report must be completed and submitted.
- If you recommend option 2 to 4, please give in the examiner's report information concerning the errors and/or shortcomings of the research, as well as recommendations for revision and correction. You can also indicate corrections electronically in the dissertation or thesis and submit it with your completed examination report.
- If you recommend option 5 (non-acceptance), please explain in the examiner's report clearly the rationale for the non-acceptance of the dissertation or thesis.

The following guidelines are presented in the Manual for Post Graduate studies and the examiner is requested to evaluate the examination document thoroughly according to these specific guidelines.

#### **3. Specific Guidelines**

##### **The topic:**

- Was the topic selected demarcated meaningfully, appropriate and worthy of research?
- Was the research design scientifically based?

**Problem statement, aims and, where applicable, hypotheses or central theoretical statement:**

- Were they formulated clearly and unambiguously, do they link up and have a bearing on one another?
- Is the problem statement scientifically relevant and are the aims clear?

**The research method:**

- Does the study show that the student adequately controls the theoretical basis?
- Is the research method suitable, selected in a critical and accountable manner and described clearly?
- Does it seem as if the student properly controls the methods and/or techniques as well?
- Is the student's own contribution clear in the case of a multidisciplinary study or project? Scientific processing, content and contribution that the work makes:
- Is the work systematic, logically developed and well-structured and balanced?
- Do the chapters form meaningful units?
- Does the content reveal in-depth knowledge of the research field?
- Does it seem as if the student can interpret and argue in a scientific manner, discuss different views and theories critically, and where necessary state and provide a basis for his/her own views?
- Is the final summary meaningful and does it reflect the spirit of the study clearly?
- Is the relative meaning of the study presented briefly?
- Do the conclusions fit in with the problem statement and aims of the study?
- Does the student make meaningful recommendations that can be followed up by other studies?
- Does the student provide meaningful and convincing solutions to problems?
- Are the aims set achieved satisfactorily?
- Is adequate attention given to the internal as well as external validity of the findings and interpretation?
- Does the work display originality with regard to the retrieval and/or development of knowledge?
- Can the work or parts of it be published?
- Is the work subject-philosophically and scientifically theoretically accountable (where applicable)?
- In the case of theses, is proof given of a definite contribution to the knowledge of and insight into the subject, and does the work provide proof of independent thinking and that the student has a special ability to work and conduct research independently?

**Study of sources:**

- Does the student provide proof of a thorough knowledge of the related literature and of an argumentative, critical and integrated handling of it, or is the literature merely used as far as it supports the student's own views? Was the right available and related literature consulted and used in an acceptable manner?
- In the case of qualitative studies, was adequate literature review carried out?

**Language and style, technical composition, care and finish:**

- Is the student's style of writing and expression up to standard, and can the text be read easily (with respect to font size, typing format and spacing) and was it language edited?
- Does the mini-dissertation/dissertation/thesis, as far as technical care is concerned, comply with the requirements (title page, table of contents, footnotes, reference technique, graphs, figures and tables, list of sources)?
- Does the document contain a summary in Afrikaans/English as well as annexures of relevant research documents?
- Is the printing and binding up to standard?

**4. General comments**

Do you have any other comments concerning the quality of the work?