

DEPARTMENT OF MECHANICAL AND MECHATRONIC ENGINEERING

Stellenbosch University

PG STUDY GUIDE 2024_2025

PhD (*Engineering*)
MEng Research (*Mechanical Engineering*)
MEng Research (*Mechatronic Engineering*)
MEng Structured (*Mechanical Engineering*)
Pg Dip in Engineering

Version: 2024_2025_1.5

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Note: M&M is the abbreviation for Mechanical & Mechatronic Engineering

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DEPARTMENT M&M ENGINEERING HOMEPAGE

Stellenbosch University:

Postgraduate and Admissions Committee

(At least two members other than the supervisor must be professors):

- Postgraduate Coordinator
- Departmental Chairman
- Dissertation/thesis/project supervisor
- One other academic staff member

Faculty of Engineering:

Departmental Management Committee

- Departmental Chairman
- Heads of the Department's Divisions
- Postgraduate Coordinators
- Other staff invited by the HOD

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1. Overview

The table below summarises some of the main distinctions amongst the postgraduate programmes offered by the Department.

Postgraduate Diploma in Engineering	Master of Engineering (Structured)	Master of Engineering (Research)*	Doctor of Philosophy
Pg Dip in Eng	MEng Structured	MEng Research	PhD
A 100 % coursework based programme, typically following after a BEng degree, requiring two semesters of study if done full time.	A coursework based programme with a composition of approximately 67 % coursework and 33 % project, typically following after a BEng degree, requiring 12 months of study if done full time.	100 % research based programme with an element of compulsory supplementary coursework, typically following after a BEng degree, requiring two years of study if done full time.	100 % research based programme, typically following after an MEng Research degree, requiring three years of study if done full time.
Refer to Appendix B for an abbreviated outcomes statement for the two MEng programmes			

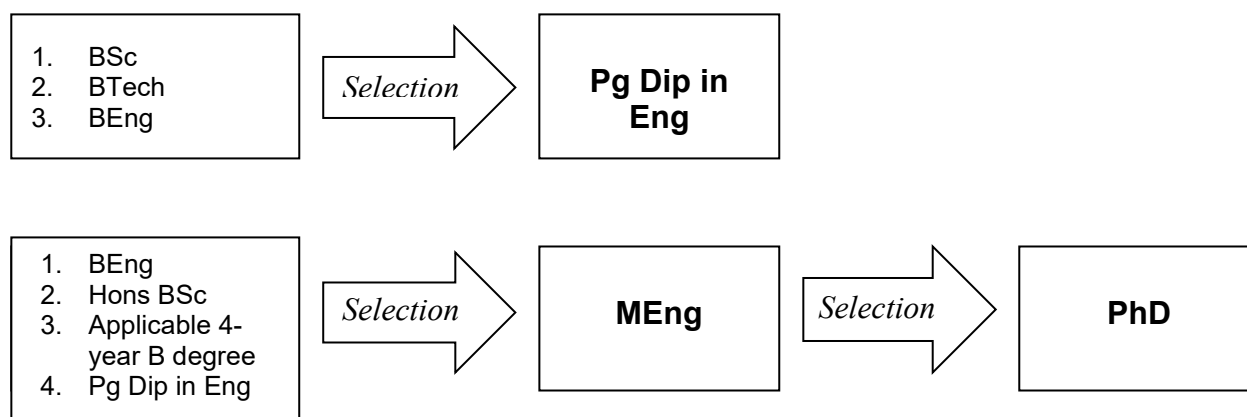
* Note that the MScEng programme, used until 2011, is equivalent to the MEng Research programme

This document is intended to provide prospective and current students with the information about these programmes that is specific to the Department of Mechanical and Mechatronic Engineering.

2. Admission and selection requirements

2.1. Overview

Before a student can register for one of the programmes considered here, the student must first pass the selection process in the department and then submit an application for admission. The relevant details of the selection process are discussed here. Applications for admission are best submitted via the university's website.



The figure above illustrates some key features of the selection requirements. The requirements given here are the minimum requirements, but do not guarantee being accepted. The Admission Committee considers applications for selection and may consider applications that do not meet the normal selection requirements, but demonstrate in another way a similar level of competence. If the Admission Committee decides that an application meets the selection requirements, its decision is communicated to the Faculty Secretary at the office of the Registrar, where the student's application for admission is then processed.

2.2. Admission and selection for PhD

Admission to the PhD programme is treated in two phases: firstly, selection and admission to the first year of study; and secondly, permission to continue after the first year of study. It should be noted that selection and admission to the first year of study grants access to the candidacy phase only and does not automatically imply permission to continue beyond the first year.

To apply for selection for the PhD programme, the student must submit to the Postgraduate Officer transcripts of his/her academic record (listing courses/modules completed and the corresponding grades awarded, as well as qualifications completed) and upon approval, an *Initial Application & Departmental Admission Form for Postgraduate Study*. A prospective student that has not completed a research-based masters' degree in South Africa, must also demonstrate his/her research ability, for example by submitting a pdf copy of a masters' thesis and/or research papers reporting research work done by the student.

To be accepted into the PhD programme, the members of the Department's Admission Committee must decide unanimously that:

- The student has demonstrated that he/she has the required background knowledge and research ability.
- The research area is suitable for doctoral studies (note that the specific topic and intended original contribution need not be described in detail for the selection process, but it must be clear that the research area will provide sufficient scope for original work by the student).
- The research is sufficiently within the areas of expertise of the supervisor(s).
- It is reasonable to expect that the infrastructure required for the research, will be available.
- Approval is subject to the discretion of the Department.

The particular requirements to continue from the first to the second year of the PhD programme are outlined in the section "Continuation Requirements".

2.3. Selection for MEng Research and MEng Structured

To apply for selection for one of the MEng programmes, the student must submit to the University of Stellenbosch (apply online via SUNStudent) transcripts of his/her academic record (listing courses/modules completed and the corresponding grades awarded, as well as qualifications completed) and upon approval, an *Initial Application & Departmental Admission Form for Postgraduate Study* to the Postgraduate Officer.

To apply for selection for MEng Structured, the *Initial Application & Departmental Admission Form for Postgraduate Study* must show:

- a study plan listing the modules the student intends doing.

For the MEng Research, the *Initial Application & Departmental Admission Form for Postgraduate Study* must show:

- a study plan listing the modules the student intends doing;
- a suitable thesis topic;
- the name of a thesis supervisor and co-supervisor(s) (if applicable) capable of guiding the student in the thesis research.

In cases where specialised facilities will be required for the student's thesis research, the application form must be accompanied by a description of the arrangements that have been made for access to suitable facilities.

To be accepted into a MEng Mechanical programme, a student must normally have completed a BEng or BScEng in mechanical engineering within the prescribed minimum number of years with an average of at least 60 %, calculated over the whole period, as well as an average of at least 60 % in the final year. For MEng Mechatronics, the corresponding requirements for a BEng or BScEng Mechatronics apply. Students that apply for admission with other qualifications will have to demonstrate equivalent performance and that they have the required technical background for the MEng programme that they are applying for. Such students may also be required to complete courses in addition to that normally required.

Approval is also subject to the discretion of the Department.

2.4. Selection for Pg Dip in Engineering

To apply for selection for the Pg Dip in Eng programme, the student must submit to the University of Stellenbosch (apply online) transcripts of his/her academic record (listing courses/modules completed and the corresponding grades awarded, as well as qualifications completed).

To be accepted into the Pg Dip in Eng programme, a student must normally have completed his/her undergraduate qualification within the prescribed minimum number of years. BSc graduates & BTech graduates must have achieved an average of at least 60 % over the whole period, as well as an average of at least 60 % in the final year.

Approval is also subject to the discretion of the Department.

2.5. Converting between programmes

2.5.1 Converting between MEng Structured and MEng Research

For conversion from the structured to the research masters, a supervisor and thesis topic must first be identified, and an *Initial Application & Departmental Admission Form for Postgraduate Study* must be completed. The student must then submit the form to the Postgraduate Officer. If the student is accepted into the MEng Research programme, the Postgraduate Officer will inform the Faculty Secretary. The student must submit a revised study plan to the Postgraduate Officer within 2 weeks of the conversion.

Applications for conversion from the research to the structured master's will be considered, subject to HEQC requirements, only if the student has not submitted a thesis to the examiners. A project supervisor and topic must first be identified, and an *Initial Application & Departmental Admission Form for Postgraduate Study* must be completed. The student must then submit the form to the Postgraduate Officer. If the application is successful, the Postgraduate Officer will inform the Faculty Secretary. The student must submit a revised study plan to the Postgraduate Officer within 2 weeks of the conversion. Note that the coursework requirements of the MEng Research are less than that of the MEng Structured. Students converting to the MEng Structured will therefore probably have to do further modules.

2.5.2 Converting between MEng Research and PhD

While carrying out the MEng Research work or after completion of the thesis the supervisor(s) and the student may come to the conclusion that the nature of the work has a significant component equivalent to PhD standard original research.

Pre-requisites for an Upgrade from Master's degree to PhD:

- Upgrades from Master's to PhD programmes are only possible from the MEng (Research) or the MEngSc (Research) programmes.
- An upgrade can be considered after not less than one year's registration for the Master's study and not later than during the third year of registration for the Master's study. (as per the General Calendar).
- At the time of application, the research work should already contain substantial original material, which is publishable. Proof of such originality can include any or all of the following:
 - a peer-reviewed conference or journal paper which has been accepted for publication,
 - a submitted conference or journal paper, which must then be judged as being publishable by the candidature panel,
- The work completed at the time of application for the upgrade, should be of such a high quality that a substantial part of it can form part of a PhD dissertation.
- The scope of the work should be extendable to the expected levels for a PhD.
- The additional work should be of such a nature that it can be completed within the maximum allowable time for a PhD after an upgrade.

An application for an upgrade towards PhD registration may be submitted in the following way:

The upgrade process is initiated by the main supervisor. A student cannot apply for an upgrade. The *supervisor(s)* may realize during the course of the student's Master's studies that the research exhibits such a degree of originality that the registration may potentially be upgraded to doctoral studies. The supervisor discusses the process, advantages, and disadvantages of the upgrade process with the student.

In this case at least one completed scientific paper must have already emerged from the work and been submitted for review to an accredited research journal. If a paper has not yet been published, a copy of the submitted paper must be attached to the Research Proposal, with proof of acceptance or submission. Furthermore, a second draft paper must have reached an advanced stage of completion to the satisfaction of the supervisor(s). The student has the opportunity to inform the department of the intension to upgrade by completing the '*submission form*' during the course of June/July which is distributed to all PG students via email.

A comprehensive PhD research proposal and an Executive Summary (*PG07-PhD Executive Summary Template*) must be submitted, and an oral presentation scheduled to a candidacy panel (might include an expert in the field, external to SU) which is considering the application to upgrade the registration to a PhD programme. The student should clearly discuss how the completed work fits into the proposal, and the proposed additional work still to be completed. Once the supervisor(s) is satisfied with the Research Proposal and Executive Summary, both are submitted, together with a full academic record of the student, article/s and the motivation letter of the supervisor(s) addressing the pre-requisites for an upgrade, to the Departmental Management Committee. The student confirms that he/she has full knowledge of the implications of an upgrade, by signing the Executive Summary. The due date for the upgrade on recommendation of supervisor/s together with all the required documents each year is **1 September**.

In the case of any of the panel members requiring a re-submission of the documents, or recommending that the upgrade not be allowed, the candidate is allowed a single opportunity to improve the documents, incorporating the comments of all the panel members, with all changes clearly indicated. The improved documents are again sent to all the panel members. The Departmental Management Committee recommends acceptance or rejection of the upgrade, the Research Proposal and Executive Summary.

At least one further year of PhD registration would be required before the PhD thesis can be submitted for examination. The full process has to be completed in time for the closing of the agenda of the last Faculty Committee meeting of the year (October), for the student to register for a PhD in the following year. If an upgrade is not recommended, the candidate continues with his/her Master studies.

Please note the above should be approved by the Faculty Committee and therefore may have timing implications.

Please refer to relevant guidelines pertaining to PhD programme studies elsewhere in this guide.

2.6. Part time studies

Part time students typically have a reduced number of hours per week available for their studies and therefore take longer to complete a degree programme. They must have access to the Internet, be able to send and receive e-mail, and be able to use a Web browser for their studies. **Part time students must be able to attend lectures and examinations in Stellenbosch.** Most of the modules required in the MEng programmes are offered on a block basis since the beginning of 2020 (refer to the [Block Schedule](#)). The modules required for the Pg Dip in Eng are offered on a block basis (i.e. with one week of contact, preceded and followed by assignments).

Part time study in the thesis/dissertation parts of MEng Research and PhD programmes are only feasible in exceptional circumstances. To qualify for part time studies, a student should submit proof of employment.

2.7 Changing from full time to part time studies

A student who registered initially for the degree on a fulltime basis may only request to change this registration to a part time basis in highly exceptional cases. Please submit your motivation together with your supervisor's approval to the Postgraduate Officer before the **15th of January**.

There is no differentiation with regards to Study Fees between full time and part time studies. The full time Study Fees will be applicable to both full time and part time registrations for all registered students. Students applying for part time studies should submit proof of employment.

3. Scope and assessment criteria

3.1. General requirements

- Full time MEng Structured students must serve at least four hours per week as **Learning Assistants (LA)** for the undergraduate programmes for two semesters. The corresponding requirement for full time MEng Research students is four semesters, and for full time PhD students five semesters. A student needs permission in writing from his supervisor to fulfil more than one demi position.
- Every assessment submitted by a student that was not done under supervision arranged by the Department, must be accompanied by the following **declaration** "I declare that the entirety of the work contained herein is my own, original work", with the student's signature and a date.
- **Plagiarism** will not be tolerated at all. Any assessment in which an instance of plagiarism is identified, will be given zero as a mark and the matter will be handled according to the University's policy on plagiarism. Note that self-plagiarism is also unacceptable; this includes unreferenced re-use of one's own articles and previous assignments.

Lecturers may, at their discretion, require students to submit assignments on Turnitin (through SUNLearn).

- **Verbatim copying** of any significant amount of information from any published sources, even with appropriate acknowledgement of the sources, is unacceptable and if found in assignments, the mark for that assessment will be substantially reduced. Students will only be given marks if they have at least interpreted, integrated or applied published work.
- **Extensions to deadlines** for submitting assessments (e.g. assignments) may not exceed one week and may be granted by the relevant lecturer, at his/her sole discretion, if a student applies for it in writing before the original due date and submits valid reasons which indicate exceptional and unforeseen circumstances. Extensions to centrally scheduled assessments, e.g. examinations, will not be granted.

3.2. PhD

Scope

The PhD programme normally only contains research (i.e. it has no compulsory coursework) and takes three years to complete. Students may, however, be required to complete supplementary coursework, at the discretion of the Admission Committee and supervisor.

All PhD students must have submitted at least one journal article to an international journal for publication by the time the student's PhD dissertation is submitted for examination. All PhD students must also submit another journal article, of acceptable standard for an international journal (electronic copies), to the Postgraduate Coordinator at or before the oral examination. The subject of the articles, whether the articles are submitted for publication and where they are submitted, will be decided by the supervisor(s). Note: Should the dissertation be classified as confidential or secret, the articles must be submitted to the supervisor(s), who will decide whether and when the articles will be submitted to journals.

Every PhD student must submit a dissertation, on one central and coherent research question, reflecting Mechanical/Mechatronic Engineering research of the student of at least 3600 hour duration (360 credits). The body of the dissertation may comprise either:

- The standard format of a dissertation is that of a full thesis, with a clear, logical and comprehensive description of the work, including an extensive literature study, and a clear presentation of the original contributions.
- The Faculty also accepts dissertations in which any or all of the content chapters are replaced by journal or conference papers which have either been published, submitted, or in a final draft form. In this format, the following elements are required in the document:
 - A comprehensive introduction to the dissertation.
 - Expanded literature study(s), and clear presentations of the original contributions.
 - For chapters where a paper replaces the standard format, the chapter must be introduced by a short discussion of the context of the paper within the dissertation, the publication status of the paper, and the specific contributions of the candidate in the case of multiple authors.
 - In the case of a short conference paper replacing a content chapter, students are encouraged to use an extended version of the paper.
 - A conclusion which includes all the work in context with respect to the whole.
 - The dissertation as a whole should form a logical and coherent unit.

If papers are included as part of the body of the dissertation, students must refer to the relevant sections in Part 1 of the University Calendar for further instructions.

The dissertation must comply with the Department's formatting requirements, adhere to the Department's *Guide for Writing Technical Reports* and satisfy all the requirements given in Part 1 of the University Calendar. The dissertation may not exceed 200 pages, between covers, i.e. introductory (contents) pages and appendices included. An online repository with additional information may be included with the dissertation, but the examiners must be able to assess the student's work without referring to the repository.

Every PhD student shall undergo an oral examination on his/her dissertation (the student must attend the oral examination in person).

Workshops

Compulsory participation on the Faculty PG Writing Integrity Module (PGWIM) – Professional Communication 871 or acceptable and approved equivalent is required. Students should complete the online course by the date indicated in Appendix A of their 1st year of PG registration.

Assessment criteria

The student must submit his/her own work in a dissertation that reflects:

- The extent to which the dissertation makes an original contribution to knowledge in its field. Related to this, the extent to which the dissertation or part of it is publishable in a peer-reviewed research journal.
- Adequate command of the relevant research method.
- Familiarity with the relevant literature.
- The ability to interpret research results.
- Clear and systematic presentation of the material and logical exposition of the argument.
- Proper documentation and support of the results of independent research.
- Acceptable linguistic and stylistic presentation.

Each examiner submits a report commenting on the above and has to return one of the following verdicts:

- Accept the dissertation as is,
- Editorial changes to the satisfaction of the supervisor are required,
- Factual or textual changes to the satisfaction of the examiners are required,
- Substantial revision of the dissertation and resubmission to the examiners are required, or
- The dissertation is rejected without the opportunity to improve it.

Final mark calculation

No mark is awarded, only a pass or fail.

3.3. MEng Research Mechanical and MEng Research Mechatronics

3.3.1. Compulsory Supplementary Coursework

Scope

Students are required to complete the following set of modules:

- One postgraduate Mathematics or Applied Mathematics module of 15 credits.
- Research Methodology (compulsory)
- Three further modules, in any of the categories, of 15 credits each. One of these modules can be substituted with a self-study module if the necessary theory for the student's thesis is not available in modules offered in the relevant year. Self-study modules are also subject to formal assessment.
- MEng Research students have to complete all modules in the first semester. *However, should the need arise to attend a block module in the second semester (including Renewable & Sustainable Energy RSE, block courses) this should be motivated by the supervisor and approved by the Department with the initial application to the Department.*

A 15 credit module nominally requires 150 h of study (contact time included) per module.

Students may apply to the Postgraduate Committee for recognition of modules done at other departments or institutions, or as part of other degree programmes. A summary of the module content, with a clear indication of the level and scope, must be submitted for consideration at time of application. The Committee will assess whether each module is considered to be equivalent to relevant category.

In exceptional cases a student may be required to do additional modules, e.g. due to insufficient background for the chosen thesis topic.

Assessment criteria

Each student must receive a final mark of at least 50 % (if marks are awarded) or be assigned "duly performed" (if final marks are not awarded in the module) for each of the required supplementary modules. Note that the marks awarded for the modules are not taken into account when determining the student's final mark for the MEng programme. For each module's assessment criteria, please refer to the relevant module's study guide.

3.3.2. Workshops

Each student, in his/her first year of postgraduate studies in the Department (full time or part time), must attend workshops arranged by the Department to prepare students for thesis writing. These workshops typically include strategies for literature searches and compiling an own literature database.

All MEng Research students enrolled since 2018 must complete the **compulsory Research Methodology module** as one of the 5 required modules (both blocks are compulsory). Compulsory participation on the Faculty PG Writing Integrity Module (PGWIM) – Professional Communication 871 or acceptable and approved equivalent is required. All required students (full time and part time) should complete the online course by the end of the 2nd Research Methodology Block – Appendix A for Due Dates.

3.3.3. Research

Scope

Every MEng Research student must submit a thesis, on one central and coherent research question, reflecting Mechanical/Mechatronic Engineering research of the student of at least 2400 hour duration (note that the credit allocation to the MEng Research programme does not reflect the amount of work normally required to complete this programme). The thesis must show clearly that the student is able to do independent scientific and technical investigations, and to interpret the results.

The thesis must comply with the Department's formatting requirements, adhere to the Department's *Guide for Writing Technical Reports* and satisfy all the requirements given in Part 1 of the University Calendar. The thesis may not exceed 80 pages from the introduction to the conclusion of the thesis, and an additional 40 pages for appendices. An online repository with additional information may be included with the dissertation, but the examiners must be able to assess the student's work without referring to the repository.

Each student must also submit a journal article, of acceptable standard for an international journal, to the Postgraduate Coordinator. The subject of the article, whether the article is submitted for publication and where it is submitted, will be decided by the supervisor(s). Note: Should the thesis be classified as confidential or secret, the article must be submitted to the supervisor(s), who will decide whether and when the article will be submitted to a journal.

An MEng Research student might be requested to attend an oral examination on his/her thesis (the student have to attend the oral examination in person).

Assessment criteria

The student must submit his/her own work in a thesis that reflects:

- Mastering of the relevant field of study (research need not necessarily be original for a Master's thesis, as for doctoral studies).
- Adequate command of the relevant research method.
- Familiarity with the relevant literature.
- The ability to interpret research results.
- Clear and systematic presentation of the material and logical exposition of the argument.
- Proper documentation and support of the results of independent research.
- Acceptable linguistic and stylistic presentation.

Each examiner submits a report commenting on the above, recommends a mark (at least 50 for pass, at least 75 for distinction) and has to return one of the following verdicts:

- Accept the thesis as is,
- Editorial changes to the satisfaction of the supervisor are required,
- Factual or textual changes to the satisfaction of the examiners are required,
- Substantial revision of the thesis and resubmission to the examiners are required, or
- The thesis is rejected without the opportunity to improve it.

3.3.4. Final mark calculation

Subject to completion of the required supplementary modules, the final mark is determined after the examination. Only the mark awarded for your thesis is normally used to determine your final mark for the MEng (Research). Calendar Part 11 (Engineering): Section 3.6.7

3.4. MEng Structured

Only the MEng Structured in Renewable and Sustainable Energy Studies is offered.

3.4.1. Coursework

Scope

Students are required to complete 8 of the [modules](#) listed + a research assignment (RA).

A 15 credit module nominally requires 150 h of study (contact time included) per module.

Students should note that the Department's postgraduate modules, are mostly presented in block format since 2020. Some modules are offered as one block and some are offered as 2 blocks (I & II), which are both compulsory. Refer to the Schedule on the Departmental website for the latest information. The RSE modules are presented in block format in one week with 45 h of contact, which is preceded and followed by assignments.

Since 2019 the attendance and completion of Research Methodology is compulsory to all MEng S students as part of the programme.

Students may apply to the Postgraduate Committee for recognition of modules done at other departments or institutions. A summary of the module content, with a clear indication of the level and scope, must be submitted for consideration at time of application. The Committee will assess whether each module is considered to be equivalent to relevant category.

Note that changes to block module selections must be done at least 6 weeks prior to the start of the module with the latest date in the 1st and 2nd semester as indicated by the SU Calendar. If not, the student is liable for the costs involved.

Assessment criteria

Please refer to the relevant modules' study guides.

3.4.2. Workshops

The Department recommends that each student, in his/her first year of postgraduate study in the Department, attend workshops arranged by the Department to prepare students for writing up their research.

Compulsory participation on the Faculty PG Writing Integrity Module (PGWIM) – Professional Communication 871 or acceptable and approved equivalent is required. All required students (full time and part time) should complete the online course by the end of the 2nd Research Methodology Block.

3.4.3. Research Assignment

Scope

Every MEng Structured student must submit a Research Assignment (RA), on one central and coherent research question, reflecting Mechanical/Mechatronic Engineering research of the student of at least 600 hour duration (60 credits). The RA may be done in industry and the nature of the RA must be that of a small research project that contains advanced theoretical and practical elements.

The project report must comply with the Department's formatting requirements and adhere to the Department's *Guide for Writing Technical Reports*.

The report may not exceed 60 pages from the introduction to the conclusion and the appendices may not be more than 30 pages. If necessary, detail information such as manufacturing drawings, data sheets, etc may be included in a project file, but not in the report. An online repository with additional information may be included with the dissertation, but the examiners must be able to assess the student's work without referring to the repository.

Assessment criteria

The student must submit his/her own work in a RA, which will be assessed using the following criteria:

- The demonstrated ability to judiciously apply advanced technical methods to reach the project's objectives.
- The demonstrated ability to suitably combine theoretical and practical elements.
- The demonstrated personal initiative and advanced skill with respect to problem solving, acquiring information, drawing sensible conclusions and applying sound judgements in the course of the project.

3.4.4. Final mark calculation

At least 50 % must be achieved for each of the required modules, as well as the RA. Note that a student will normally not be given the opportunity to improve his/her MEng Structured RA once it has been submitted for examination. If a student does not receive 50 % for the assignment, he/she would have to do a new RA, but remains subject to the maximum time allowed for enrolment.

Your weighted average, which is determined based on the credit weighting of all required modules and the research assignment, is normally used as your final mark for the MEng (Structured). Your marks for supplementary modules are not used for determining your final mark. Calendar Part 11 (Engineering): Section 3.6.7

3.5. Pg Dip in Engineering

Only the Pg Dip in Eng in Renewable and Sustainable Energy Studies is offered.

3.5.1. Coursework

Scope

Students are required to complete 8 of the [modules](#) listed.

The RSE modules are presented in a block format in one week with 45 h of contact, which is preceded and followed by assignments. The total workload (including contact time) is 150 h per 15 credit module.

Students may apply to the Postgraduate Committee for recognition of modules done at other departments or institutions. A summary of the module content, with a clear indication of the level and scope, must be submitted for consideration at time of application. The Committee will assess whether each module is considered to be equivalent to the relevant category.

The Pg Dip in Eng programme is not aimed at preparing students for the master's programmes.

3.5.2. Workshop

Compulsory participation on the Faculty Plagiarism Integrity Module (PGWIM) – Professional Communication 771 or acceptable and approved equivalent is required. All required students (full time and part time) should complete the online course by the date indicated in Appendix A of their 1st year of PG registration.

Assessment criteria:

Please refer to the relevant modules' study guides.

3.5.3. Final mark calculation

At least 50 % must be achieved for each of the required modules. The final mark is the average of the modules, weighted according to their credits.

4. Continuation requirements

4.1. Study Plan, Study Agreement and Thesis/ Research Proposal

All students are required to compile a Study Plan before admission, as contained in the Departmental Postgraduate Application Form. The Study Plan must be completed in consultation with the thesis/dissertation supervisor for research-based programmes. The Study Plan must show all the modules that are to be used to determine whether the student has met all the requirements for graduation and for the student's final mark.

The **Study Plan** may be amended only with the approval of the supervisor (for MEng Research and PhD students) and the Postgraduate Coordinator.

The **Study Agreement** (required for MEng Research and PhD students) based on the example in Appendix C must be submitted to the Postgraduate Coordinator within one month of commencing studies (end of February- Appendix A).

By the date indicated in Appendix A, MEng Research & Structured students must submit a **written thesis proposal** to his/her supervisor. The proposal must include an exposition of the objectives and planning of the RA or thesis. Thesis proposals must also include a literature review and an overview of the thesis work completed to date (detailed guidelines for thesis proposals are given in an appendix of the third edition of the Guide for Writing Technical Reports). This document is the only outcome of the compulsory Research Methodology module.

Once the Postgraduate Coordinator has accepted the thesis/research proposal, the proposal forms an integral part of the student's Study Plan.

For further details regarding the PhD Research Proposal, please refer to the section, below, that describes the PhD Candidacy.

4.2. The maximum time of enrolment allowed

Students must take note of the maximum time allowed for enrolment as indicated below. Re-registration after the maximum time requires the permission of the Faculty Committee and will be granted only in exceptional circumstances.

From 2021 no differentiation will be made with regards to Study Fees between full time and part time studies. The full time Study Fees will be applicable to both full time and part time registrations for all registered students.

Key:

M	Minimum (mandatory) enrolment period. (Under exceptional circumstances the degree may be completed in this period)	Normal maximum period of enrolment
N	Normal enrolment after minimum. (The period required to complete the degree normally spans M and N)	
F	Final concessional year (may register without having to apply for readmission)	
X	Enrolment only if readmission has been approved by the Faculty Board or, for a PhD, the Senate.	Allowed in exceptional circumstances
-	Further registrations normally not allowed	

The table below shows the following for the respective postgraduate programmes:

- The minimum number of years you must be enrolled,
- For how long you can normally expect to be enrolled,
- How many years you may enrol without having to apply for readmission (that is, the maximum period of enrolment for each postgraduate programme, as approved by the Faculty Board in 2004), and
- The year you will require permission for readmission, if you have not completed the programme by then.

Programme	Years of Enrolment								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
PGDip (Eng) Full-time	M	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
PGDip (Eng) Part-time	M	F	X	-	-	-	-	-	-
MEng (Structured) Full-time	M	F	X	-	-	-	-	-	-
MEng (Structured) Part-time	M	N	F	X	-	-	-	-	-
MEng (Research) Full-time	M	N	F	X	-	-	-	-	-
MEng (Research) Part-time	M	N	N	F	X	-	-	-	-
MEngSc (Structured) Full-time	M	F	X	-	-	-	-	-	-
MEngSc (Structured) Part-time	M	N	F	X	-	-	-	-	-
MEngSc (Research) Full-time	M	N	F	X	-	-	-	-	-
MEngSc (Research) Part-time	M	N	N	F	X	-	-	-	-
PhD Full-time (after master's)	M	M	N	F	X	-	-	-	-
PhD Full-time (after BEng, no master's)	M	M	M	N	F	X	-	-	-
PhD Part-time (after master's)	M	M	N	N	N	F	X	-	-
PhD Part-time (after BEng, no master's)	M	M	M	N	N	N	F	X	-

4.2.1 Procedure for the re-admission of postgraduate students who exceed the maximum time allowed to graduate.

MEng Research / Structured:

Master's students who do not complete their programmes within the maximum permissible period of registration, are automatically admitted for a final concessional year. In September, of the final concessional year, they are informed via email by the Faculty Administrator that they will not be able to automatically register for the next academic year. The maximum permissible time frames are:

- MEng (Research) full-time 3 years
- MEng (Research) part-time 4 years
- MEng (Structured) full-time 2 years
- MEng (Structured) part-time 3 years

PhD:

Doctoral students who do not complete their programmes within the maximum permissible period of registration, are automatically admitted for a final concessional year. In September, of the final concessional year, they are informed via email by the Faculty Administrator that they will not be able to automatically register for the next academic year. The maximum permissible time frames are:

- PhD full-time 4 years (5 years after starting Masters' if upgrade)
- PhD part-time 6 years (7 years after starting Masters' if upgrade)

The following procedure for re-admission applies to PG Dip, MEng S, MEng R & PhD students:

The list of students in their final concessional year is sent to the relevant department's Postgraduate Coordinators, Departmental Chairs and the Vice-Dean (Research & Industry Liaison). The Postgraduate Coordinators inform the supervisors.

Students who want to continue their programmes in the year(s) following the final concessional year, are informed in the same notification that they have to formally apply for re-admission to the Office of the Postgraduate Coordinator by **1 December** of their final concessional year, for consideration by the Departmental Management Committee. The re-admission application should be in writing, using the form

PG12-M and PhD Re-admission Application, and in consultation with the supervisor. PG Dip students submit the completed form directly to the PG Programme & Student Manager. The application should include the following:

- The reasons why the programme was not completed in the final concessional year.
- Current state of completion of the programme.
- A schedule in terms of quarterly goals for the year, which will ensure completion of the examination process by the end of the year.

The Postgraduate Coordinator requests a confidential recommendation by the supervisor.

The student can only be considered for re-admission at the end of the final concessional year if an examination ready thesis/dissertation is submitted to the supervisor by 1 December of that year. Please note this is the last and only opportunity to submit ALL relevant support documents with the application for the Management Committee to make an informed decision.

The Management Committee approves or declines the application, and sends the recommendation by the close of the Faculty Committee agenda to the Faculty Administrator, who will table it at the first Faculty Committee meeting of the year.

If an application for re-admission is not received by **1 December**, the student is not allowed to register.

At the end of each quarter (i.e. the last day of March, June, and September), the student submits a two page/500 word progress report to the Postgraduate Coordinator (via the PG administrator), who submits it to the Management Committee. N/A to PG Dip students.

It is the responsibility of the student to identify a lack of progress in terms of the schedule, and to inform the Management Committee in the case of a lack of progress.

In the case of satisfactory progress, the report and evaluations are filed. In the case of non- satisfactory progress, the Management Committee informs the student in writing that the progress was non-satisfactory. The Management Committee may also decide on other measures, including terminating or limiting support for the project.

4.3. PhD candidacy and continuation from first to second year

PhD students' (full and part time) admission without a Research Proposal to the first year does not automatically allow continuation after the first year. To be allowed to continue after the first year of registration, the following procedures will apply (in order to mitigate the risk associated with a long duration PhD program):

- 4.3.1. The PhD candidate must submit a final full research proposal, together with an Executive Summary using the form *PG07-PhD Executive Summary Template*, to the PG administrator, by the date set in Appendix A, in their first year of registration. The research proposal should typically be 20 to 30 pages long and must adhere to the instructions given in Appendix E.
- 4.3.2. Typically two to four weeks after a candidate has submitted the research proposal, his/her suitability to continue with PhD studies is assessed by a candidacy panel. The candidacy panel comprises the proposed/actual supervisor(s), and at least two expert and experienced people, one of whom must come from outside the home department, with at least two members holding PhD's. The Vice-dean: Research & Industry Liaison must approve the proposed Candidature Panel.

In the case of any of the panel members requiring a re-submission of any of the documents, or indicating that the candidate should not be allowed to continue with the PhD, the candidate is allowed a single opportunity to improve the documents, incorporating the comments of all the panel members, with all changes clearly indicated. The improved documents are sent again to all the panel members. All panel members are asked to re-evaluate the documents, and respond in writing (email acceptable). If unanimously approved, the Postgraduate Coordinator completes the form PG09-PhD Proposal Outcome Report. All correspondence with the panel is kept on archive in the Department.

If, after a second submission, any of the panel members recommend that the candidate not be allowed to continue with the PhD, or non-approval of the Research Proposal and Executive Summary, a mandatory oral is scheduled. The oral is attended by the full Candidature Panel, and chaired by the Postgraduate Coordinator. On completion of the oral, the Postgraduate Coordinator completes the form PG09-PhD Proposal Outcome Report.

If no consensus could be reached at the oral, the matter is referred to the Departmental Management Committee for a final decision.

- 4.3.3. The Departmental Management Committee recommends acceptance or rejection of the Research Proposal and/or Executive Summary. The Committee may request the opinion of an additional external panel member if the panel members are not unanimous.
- 4.3.4. The full process must be completed in time for the closing of the agenda of the last Faculty Committee meeting of the first year of registration (normally middle of October). Late submissions will only be considered in extraordinary circumstances, and with motivation by the supervisor and support by the Departmental Management Committee.

4.4. Annual satisfactory progress requirements

According to the general rules of the university, the Chairman of the Department (usually aided by the Post Graduate Coordinator) has to confirm that a postgraduate student has made satisfactory progress before the student will be allowed to register for the second or following years, up to the maximum allowed period. Permission to register after the maximum period can only be granted by the Faculty Committee and will be given only in exceptional cases.

Although special circumstances will be considered by the Chairman, the following are typical measures that will be applied when assessing whether a student's progress is satisfactory:

- Part time MEng Structured students are expected to pass at least three modules per year. They must also be able to complete the MEng Structured programme in the remaining time by passing no more than 4 modules per year and only doing their MEng Structured RA in the last year allowed.
- Full time MEng Structured students are expected to pass at least seven modules per year.
- Full time MEng Research students are expected to pass at least four of the required supplementary study modules in the first year.
- Any student that does not complete a module within two attempts will be considered to be making unsatisfactory progress.

4.5. Interruption of studies

Unless the Faculty Board's prior approval has been obtained to interrupt registration, students must reregister every year from first acceptance into the particular postgraduate programme until graduation. Graduation in the March graduation ceremony requires being registered for the preceding calendar year.

Students (particularly part time students) whose circumstances prevent them from expecting to make satisfactory progress in a given year can apply to the Faculty Board for an interruption of studies before the start of that year. Such an interruption can only be awarded once and an appropriate motivation for the application is required. University fees are not levied in the year of interruption, and the maximum allowed period for completion of the programme will be extended by one year. Interruption of studies can only be considered for students who applied before the end of their final concessional year. Interruption of studies can only be considered for students who have made sufficient progress in the previous years.

Please request the relevant *PG13- Interruption of Postgraduate Studies* form from the PG administrator to apply in time.

[General US Calendar](#) [Section 10 of Postgraduate Studies].

4.6 Discontinuation of studies

Refer to the [General US Calendar](#) [Section 20 of Administration & Registration].

Inform your supervisor in writing as well as the Faculty Secretary (PhD students) or Faculty Admin Officer (M & Pg Dip in Eng students) **and** the Department's PG Admin Officer.

5. Examination of research assignments, theses and dissertations

For the sake of brevity, in this section "thesis" should be taken to include PhD dissertations, MEng Research theses and MEng Structured research assignment reports. Further, "Postgraduate Coordinator" and "Postgraduate Officer" should be taken to include persons acting on their behalf or assigned the relevant duty by the Departmental Chairperson.

Dissertation requirements:

Requirements for PhD candidates are clearly stipulated in Section 6.9 of the chapter on Postgraduate Qualifications in Part 1 of the University Calendar. Further department-specific requirements are as follows:

- If published and/ or unpublished articles, are included in the dissertation, they must be in the standard format as prescribed by the Department (refer to Technical Writing Guide). In cases where published articles are cited (i.e. not included) in the dissertation, copies of these papers must be submitted with the thesis for examination. Refer to [Section 3.2](#) for more detail.
- Dissertation must be coherent and examinable which must be checked and approved by the supervisor before submission.
- Postgraduate coordinators must be informed beforehand if papers will be included in dissertations.

Article based MEng Research theses are not allowed.

5.1. Notification of the intent to submit and preparing the thesis for submission

Students must inform their supervisors of their intention to submit their theses at least four months before the planned submission date. Students must keep in mind that supervisors may require at least a few weeks to review their draft theses and that the changes required by the supervisors typically take the students more than one week to complete. The period required by supervisors to review a student's thesis will be even greater if the supervisor has multiple students submitting at the same time.

Theses will, except in exceptional circumstances, only be submitted to the examination process after the supervisor has given his/her consent. Two situations that could lead to examination of the thesis without the supervisor's consent are:

- A student may insist on submitting a thesis for examination without the supervisor's consent.
- A supervisor will normally review a student's thesis (and give feedback to the student) no more than twice. If a supervisor judges the student's thesis to still not meet the required standard for submission after two rounds of feedback by the supervisor and improvement by the student, then the supervisor may (at his/her sole discretion) withhold consent and further supervision of the student. The student can then either withdraw from the relevant programme or insist on submitting the thesis for examination without the supervisor's consent.

If a thesis is submitted without the supervisor's consent, the examiners will be instructed not to assume that the thesis being examined has the supervisor's approval.

5.2. Appointment of examiners or moderators

Having received notice of a student's intention to submit a thesis, the supervisor (note: not the student) must nominate potential internal examiners (for all document types), external examiners (for theses and dissertations) and external moderators (for RA reports) using the Faculty's prescribed form. The external examiners' or moderators' CV's should be attached. The nominations are considered by the Postgraduate Committee, then the Faculty Committee and are appointed by the Faculty Board.

At least one internal examiner (normally a member of the Faculty Board) and one external moderator must be nominated for MEng Structured RA. The supervisor(s) also act(s) as examiners for MEng Structured RA. For MEng Research theses, one internal examiner (normally a member of the Faculty Board) and one external examiner must be nominated, and preference is given to overseas experts as external examiners. Usually, only examiners with at least a master's degree are considered for appointment as examiner for MEng Research and MEng Structured students. At least three examiners must be nominated for PhD dissertations, and at least two of the examiners must be external. At least one of the external examiners should normally be an overseas expert. Usually, only examiners with a PhD degree are considered for appointment as examiners for PhD students.

The examiners must be independent, i.e. they may not have participated in the inception of the project/research or in guidance of the student, they must have no significant financial involvement in the outcome of the

examination process and there must be no family or social friendship relationship between the examiner and the student.

Note that there may be no direct contact or correspondence, relating to the dissertation/thesis/ research assignment, between the student and the examiners, nor between the supervisor and the examiners, during the examination process.

5.3. Initial examination steps for dissertations, theses and research assignments

Note that, as stated before, in this section "thesis" should be taken to include PhD dissertations, MEng Research theses and MEng Structured research assignments. Further, "Postgraduate Coordinator" and "Postgraduate Officer" should be taken to include persons acting on their behalf or assigned the relevant duty by the Departmental Chairperson.

The following paragraphs outline the first steps of the normal examination procedure that applies irrespective of the document type:

- The thesis cannot be submitted for examination before completion of all required or supplementary coursework.
- The student should complete a notification form to the Postgraduate Officer notifying her of his/her hand-in date. The Postgraduate Officer will send this via email towards the end of July. Students have to attend the Examination Procedure Session – refer to **Appendix A: Due Dates**.
- The student must ensure that the thesis exactly complies with the departmental formatting requirements. The student must also ensure that the thesis generally complies with the Department's *Guide for Writing Technical Reports* and is free of editorial and grammatical errors before submitting it for examination, after the supervisor(s) approval. Make use of the grammar & layout checklist on SUNLearn while writing the draft which should be signed off by the student & supervisor(s) before submission.
- The student must submit a black & white paper copy of the thesis, to his/her supervisor(s). Supervisor(s) will hand their consent or their decision to withhold consent directly to the PGO - *PG03-Confidential Declaration by supervisor*.
- The student also submits the thesis to Turnitin and print the cover page (1 page) Turnitin report. If evidence of plagiarism is found, the document will be rejected outright and the matter will be referred to the Central Disciplinary Committee. Also submit this first page of the Turnitin report to your supervisor.
- Upon receipt of the copy, received from the supervisor(s), the Postgraduate Officer prepares the normal covering letters for the Postgraduate Coordinator's signature and sends the thesis with covering letters to the examiners by courier/email.
- Submissions (August/September & November) will ONLY be electronically. Please make sure to send all requested documents to your supervisor/s in time for approval before submitting to the PG Administrator. Please refer to **Appendix A** for the final submission dates @ **12:00 noon**.
- Students are required to attend the Session on the Examination Procedures normally scheduled in Jul / Aug (refer to Appendix A) to understand the specific procedure and what is required for each programme as explained in more detail than in sections 5.4 & 5.5 below.

5.4. Examination procedure for MEng Structured Research Assignments

After the initial examination steps given above, the further steps of the examination procedure are:

- The supervisor(s) and the internal examiner are asked in the covering letters to complete their examination of the report in four – six weeks.
- When the Postgraduate Officer has received the examination reports from the supervisor(s) and internal examiner, a pdf of the RA and the examination reports from the supervisor(s) and the internal examiner are sent via email to the external moderator for consideration.
- The external moderator is asked to complete the moderation in four – six weeks.
- When the Postgraduate Officer has received the moderator's report, this report is submitted to the Postgraduate Coordinator, together with the examiners' reports. If the reports' recommendations are closely aligned, the external moderator's recommended mark is noted as the final mark for the student's project. If there are significant differences of opinion between the reports, the reports are tabled at the department's Management Committee who makes a final decision about the mark to be awarded to the student's project. If a supervisor or examiner is also a member of the Management Committee, they do not take part in the final decision about the student's project mark.

- Students are not offered the opportunity to improve a report. If the student is awarded a mark of less than 50 for the RA, he/she is given only one further opportunity to do a new research project and submit a new report, but remains subject to the maximum time allowed for enrolment.

5.5. Examination procedure for MEng Research Theses and PhD Dissertations

After the initial examination steps given above, the further steps of the examination procedure are:

- The internal and external examiners are asked in the covering letters to complete their examination of the thesis in six weeks.
- The supervisor(s) are given the opportunity to submit reports commenting on the amount of guidance given to the student, the student's general performance and circumstances imposed on the student that may have constrained his/her performance. This report must be submitted to the Postgraduate Officer before the supervisor(s) are given access to the examiners' reports.
- When the Postgraduate Officer has received the examination reports from the examiners, the reports are submitted to the Postgraduate Coordinator. For MEng Research students, if the reports' recommendations are closely aligned and if the examiners require at most changes to the satisfaction of the supervisor(s), the Postgraduate Officer will offer the student and the supervisor(s) the opportunity to complete the examination with a consensus mark agreed by all parties. However, it is a requirement that the student presents at a local conference or colloquium before submission & submit an article to the satisfaction of the supervisor to complete the examination. Additionally, note that if the grades / examiner reports differ notably, the oral can be waived by submitting a rebuttal to all examiners or an oral will be arranged if the requirements were not met and the examiners can't reach consensus on the final mark.
- For MEng R students an oral examination is, however, always required in any of the following cases:
 - Any examiner recommends a failing mark.
 - No consensus can be reached by the examiners regarding a final mark.
 - The Departmental Management Committee requests an oral examination.
- In the case where an oral examination is required the following applies:
 - If the examiners give their consent, their reports (without making, for MEng, their recommended marks known) are made available to the supervisor, who may provide copies to the student. The candidate in consultation with the supervisor, may respond in writing to the comments of all the examiners, in one document. This document must be sent to all the examiners by the PGO, if an oral is requested.
 - NO changes are made to the thesis/dissertation before the oral examination.
- At the oral examination, an independent non-examining chairperson (appointed by the Postgraduate Coordinator) presides over a meeting of the examiners, supervisor(s) and student. Out-of-town examiners normally participate by way of telephone conference or via MS Teams. Where an oral is arranged in person the student must attend the oral examination although for orals arranged online for example via MS Teams it is not necessary. The oral examination normally uses the following process:
 - The chairperson confirms that the student has met the requirements regarding preparing and/or submission of journal articles from the thesis research.
 - The student presents a 20 minute oral presentation (if a public presentation was not delivered before) open to the public (if protocols at the time allows).
 - The examiners then pose questions in camera to the student and consider his/her answers. The supervisor(s) are not allowed to participate in the questions or answers.
 - When the examiners have no further questions, the student leaves the room. The chairman reads the supervisor report(s) to the examiners to place the research into context with respect to aspects such as the amount of work done, independence, unique contributions, etc., which the supervisor(s) can expand on. The examiners then have the opportunity to pose questions to the supervisor.
 - When the examiners have no further questions for the supervisor(s), the supervisor(s) leave(s) the room and the chairperson gives the examiners the opportunity to amend the recommendations in their earlier reports.
 - The chairperson then attempts to help the examiners reach a consensus recommendation (and final mark for MEng Research theses). If consensus is reached, the corresponding decision is noted and made known to the student and supervisor(s), with the warning that the result is subject to approval by

the Department's Management Committee, the Faculty Board (for all PhD results) and the University Senate.

- If the examiners cannot reach consensus, their reports are referred to the Department's Management Committee who decides on further procedures (typically appointing further examiners).
- If the MEng thesis is of exceptional quality, and there is indication that the work done during the masters study lends itself to continuation of the work, the candidate may be offered the possibility to upgrade his or her Masters to a PhD after additional work has been completed. Please refer to [Section 2.5](#)
- In the case of a re-submission of the thesis being required by any examiner, the candidate is allowed a single opportunity to improve the document after the oral, incorporating the comments of all the examiners, with all changes clearly indicated. These improvements must be submitted within allowed time limits on the Master's programme. The revised thesis is again sent to all the examiners, for a second round of examination or approval. No additional submission can be requested. However, for PhD candidates a second round of oral might be requested. If all examiner report forms in this round indicate that the degree should be awarded, the Postgraduate Coordinator completes the form *PG05-M Examination Commission Report / PG11-PhD Examination Commission Report*. If any examiner report form indicates a fail, the Postgraduate Coordinator must attempt to reach a consensus result. If no consensus can be reached, the matter is referred to the Departmental Management Committee for a final decision.
- In the case of a favourable decision by the examiners, the student must complete the required changes to the thesis, and submit the final version (e-thesis) in the prescribed pdf format to the Postgraduate Officer by the due date indicate in **Appendix A** for the relevant graduation ceremony. If the supervisor(s) so require, the student must also arrange, through the printers appointed by the University, for obtaining a bound paper copy for each supervisor at the student's cost.

6. Duties of supervisors and students

The duties of the supervisor are:

- To be readily available for appointments with the student, at least 1 hour per fortnight, except when on leave. When the supervisor is on research or study leave, he/she will make arrangements for continued study guidance.
- Give regular guidance and feedback to the student about formulation of objectives, literature, methodology and progress.
- Make arrangements for equipment and operating costs that are required by the student for his/her research, unless the research topic was suggested by the student.
- Require of the student no more than 9 hours per week (averaged over a semester) of work not directly related to his/her coursework and research. The time that a student serves as an assistant in modules is included in this total.
- Attempt to provide a workplace for full time MEng Research and PhD students (such as in an office or in a laboratory).

The responsibilities of the student are to:

- Regularly meet with the supervisor in Stellenbosch, irrespective of whether a full time or part time, residential or non-residential student.
- Do his/her best to finish the programme in the minimum period.
- Repay all bursaries and assistantships that were arranged by the supervisor if the programme is not successfully completed.
- If a full time student, undertake no part time work, assistantships or academic activities unrelated to the programme, until the programme has been completed, without the express permission of the supervisor.
- If a full time student, work 60 hours per week on coursework, research and assistantships.
- Use all equipment, instrumentation, experimental set-ups and laboratories with care and good judgement.
- Scrupulously comply with all the terms and conditions set out in the Study Guide for the postgraduate programme, as well as Parts 1 and 11 of the University Calendar.

Appendix A: Due dates

The following due dates are applicable.

The Study Agreement, which fixes the dates of some events, constitutes an agreement between the student and the supervisor.

Note:

- All documents intended for the Postgraduate Coordinator must be submitted through the Postgraduate Officer (PGO).
- Always use the latest updated version available on SUNLearn: **ME Eng 414 ~ 2024**
- All deadlines (submissions) are **12:00** noon unless indicated otherwise.

Pre-graduation Events:	Action	Deadline
PG Information Meeting 2024: All new PG 1 st year registrations	Attend	12 Feb (online)
Study Agreement - Appendix C: (1 st yr MEng & PhD)	To PGO	29 Feb
PGWIM (Professional Communication 771/871) – All PG students in their 1 st year of studies – Online via SUNLearn	Completed	9 Apr
Research Proposals: (all M & Special M-students completing the Research Methodology module – Final pdf document to supervisor/s via email)	To Supervisor/s	17 May
Examination Procedure Information Session: 2024/2025 (All students submitting in Aug/Sept or Nov 2024)	Attend	1 Aug
PhD Proposal & Executive Summary – Appendix E: (1 st yr PhD) Full-time students: Part-time students: July registrations of the previous year (special students only):	To PGO To PGO To PGO	31 Jul 30 Aug 29 Feb
Upgrade (MEng R to PhD) before examination: (on recommendation of supervisor)	To PGO	2 Sep
Progress Assessment - Appendix D: (ALL registered MEng R & PhD students NOT graduating Dec 2024 / March 2025)	To PGO	31 Oct
Application for re-admission for the following year: (Only students in final concessional year)	To PGO	2 Dec
December Graduation 2024:		
PhD Dissertation submission to examiners	To PGO	12-15 Aug
MEng Research Thesis & MEng Structured RA submission to examiners	To PGO	9-12 Sept
PhD Oral dates (please make sure you are available on all <u>4</u> days)	Attend	1-3 Oct
MEng Research Oral dates (please make sure you are available on all <u>6</u> days)	Attend	28-31 Oct
Thesis/Dissertation examined and approved for SUNScholar	To PGO	15 Nov
March Graduation 2025:		
PhD Dissertation submission to examiners	To PGO	4-7 Nov
MEng Research Thesis & MEng Structured RA submission to examiners	To PGO	11-14 Nov
PhD Oral dates (please make sure you are available on all <u>3</u> days)	Attend	28-30 Jan
MEng Research Oral dates (please make sure you are available on all <u>4</u> days)	Attend	4-7 Febr
Thesis/Dissertation examined and approved for SUNScholar	To PGO	20 Febr
Graduation Dates 2024 / 2025:		
March 2024		28 Mar @ 13:00
December 2024		10 Dec @ 17:00
March 2025 (week of 24-28 March)		** TBC

[Graduation info: SU website](#)

** **TBC** – please keep an eye on updated versions of the Study guide on SUNLearn: **ME 414 ~ 2024**.

Appendix B: MEng outcomes statement

MEng Research	MEng Structured
<p>Critical General Outcomes: The graduate will</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have extensive knowledge of the chosen field of study. 2. Understand and master advanced theory and applications in the chosen field of study. 3. Understand and know the literature and state of research of the chosen field of study. 4. Understand the preliminary nature of knowledge. 5. Have well developed research skills. 	<p>Critical General Outcomes: The graduate will</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have extensive knowledge of the chosen field of study. 2. Understand and master advanced theory and applications in the chosen field of study. 3. Be able to formulate, analyse and solve complex engineering problems. 4. Have high-level capabilities to design complex engineering systems. 5. Have integrated specialist knowledge of engineering.
<p>General Outcomes: The graduate can:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Independently analyse new information and problems through application of a wide range of methods and techniques applicable to the specific problem. 2. Critically evaluate all relevant information and literature. 3. Extrapolate the implications of evaluations beyond the given. 4. Use higher order principles to analyse data. 5. Transform abstract data to an understandable form for a given goal. 6. Evaluate specific evidence that relates to critical conclusions. 7. Formulate complex problems. 8. Apply appropriate knowledge and capabilities in the solution of complex problems. 9. Compile and manipulate abstract models. 10. Use well developed research skills with authority. 11. Re-evaluate existing theories and propose new theories. 12. Handle contradictions and apply considered judgements. 13. Conduct a debate with fellow students, professional colleagues and superiors, and compile reports that are logical, considered and correct. 	<p>General Outcomes: The graduate:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Has mastered at least one specialist field in engineering on advanced level. 2. Has knowledge of at least one, but preferably more, specialist fields in engineering. 3. Has mastered advanced analytical techniques. 4. Use higher order principles to analyse data. 5. Can model complex engineering systems to apply advanced analytical techniques to analyse and predict the systems' behaviour. 6. Can specify, conceptualise and design complex engineering systems. 7. Apply appropriate knowledge and capabilities in the solution of complex problems. 8. Can manage conflicting requirements and apply considered judgements in the resolution thereof. 9. Conduct a debate with fellow students, professional colleagues and superiors, and compile reports that are logical, considered and correct.

<p>The graduate can demonstrate that he/she</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Has mastered a theoretical, sophisticated topic and can solve related problems in an acceptable, extensive field of knowledge. 2. Is an expert in an advanced field of knowledge and in applications of the field. 3. Can do independent research through successful completion of a project and all assignments. 4. Can understand the application of specific academic and professional values. 5. Has the characteristics to take controlled risks. 6. Is introspective and adaptable. 	<p>The graduate can demonstrate that he/she</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Has mastered a specialist field of knowledge and can apply it to practical engineering problems and systems. 2. Is an expert in an advanced field of knowledge and in applications of the field. 3. Can independently work as an engineering specialist through successful completion of a research project and all assignments. 4. Can understand the application of specific academic and professional values. 5. Has the characteristics to take controlled risks. 6. Is introspective and adaptable.
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Appendix C: Study Agreement Template_2024 MEng R & PhD

Department of Mechanical and Mechatronic Engineering
Stellenbosch University

Study Agreement for Postgraduate Study (ALL 1st yr MEng Research & PhD students)

1. Particulars of Student:

- 1.1. Initials and Surname: _____
- 1.2. Student number: _____
2. Supervisor: _____
3. Programme: _____
4. Thesis/Dissertation topic: _____
5. Start date of study: _____
6. Date that thesis/research proposal is to be submitted:

7. Planned completion date of programme: _____

8. Responsibilities:

Once the thesis/research proposal has been accepted by the Postgraduate Coordinator/Faculty Board, it will be part of the study agreement.

8.1. Responsibilities of the Supervisor

The supervisor agrees to:

- 8.1.1. To be readily available for appointments with the student, typically _ hour per _____, except when on leave. When the supervisor is on research or study leave, he/she will make arrangements for continued study guidance.
- 8.1.2. Give regular guidance and feedback about formulation of objectives, literature, methodology and progress.
- 8.1.3. Arrange financing for equipment and operating costs that is needed by the student for his/her research.
- 8.1.4. Attempt to arrange bursaries and assistantships to the amount of _____ per year made available in ____ instalments for ____ years for the student, subject to acceptable progress of the student to complete the degree in the allocated time (two years for a Master's degree and three years for a Doctoral degree). This amount excludes any other bursaries or scholarships received during that year (such as bursaries from the University, Faculty, Department, NRF, Harry Crossley fund etc.). These additional bursaries will be monitored by the supervisor(s) in order for the total bursary amount paid to the student to not exceed _____ per annum. This bursary amount arranged by the supervisor may be revised by the supervisor if the student receives other bursaries.
- 8.1.5. Require no more than 9 hours of work per week not related to this programme (time for one student assistantship of 4 hours per week forms part of these hours).
- 8.1.6. Attempt to provide a workplace for the student in an office or in a laboratory.

8.2 Responsibilities of the student

The student agrees to:

- 8.2.1. Do his/her best to finish this study programme in _____ years.
- 8.2.2. Repay all bursaries and assistantships that were arranged by the supervisor and costs incurred by the Department, with interest accrued at the prime interest rate if the agreed upon study programme was not completed successfully within the maximum registration period allowed by the Faculty of Engineering for the programme. The repayment will be completed within two years of the last day of registration in the programme.

8.2.3. Until the completion of the programme in paragraph 3:

- ✧ Not accept bursaries without the permission of the supervisor except university awarded merit bursaries. All bursaries must be reported to the supervisor as soon as they are awarded, including the amount of said bursaries. This restriction will apply to all bursaries from the National Research Foundation, employers such as Eskom and SASOL, and bursaries from trusts or other donor agencies.
- ✧ Undertake no part/full time work, assistantships, or modules without the prior permission of the supervisor, which must be applied for in writing.
- ✧ Not change the study plan without the permission of the supervisor. If the student wants to change programme or research project he/she must apply in writing to do so and may forfeit the bursary if it is decided that the new programme/ project is no longer part of the focus of the supervisor or grant.
- ✧ Be at his/her office from _____ to _____ and from _____ to _____ every workday, unless arranged otherwise with the supervisor, and to take no more than _____ workdays vacation per year.
- ✧ Work _____ hours per week on coursework, research, and assistantships.
- ✧ Remain a full-time student for the entire academic year in which bursary is received. If the degree is completed midway through the year, only _____ % of the values of the bursary will be received from it. The supervisor must be informed of any change in the status of registration.
- ✧ Use all equipment, instrumentation, experimental set-ups and laboratories with care and good judgement.
- ✧ Scrupulously comply with all the terms and conditions set out in the Study Guide for the postgraduate programme, as well as Parts 1 and 11 of the University Calendar.
- ✧ Assist with demonstrations associated with the lab's funding support, as well as for the Faculty's Winter week and Open Days.
- ✧ Comply with the Department's requirements for service by postgraduate students (e.g. student assistantships).

8.2.4 Submit at least _____ manuscript(s) for publication, which should meet the approval of the supervisor(s), or be acceptable for publication in the proceedings of an international/national conference within 24 months of study,

and/or

submit at least _____ manuscript(s) for publication within 24 months of study, which should meet the approval of the supervisor(s), and are acceptable for submission for publication in an international journal.

8.2.5 Provide the supervisor with the final draft of his/her thesis/dissertation (which has been thoroughly checked using spell checker and grammar checker software) at least **6 weeks** before the intended date for submission to the examiners.

8.2.6 **Code of Conduct** guiding the relationship between the supervisor and student – [General Calendar Part 1 – 2024 \(p.72\)](#)

9. Signatures:

Student _____ Date _____

Supervisor _____ Date _____

PG Coordinator _____ Date _____

Appendix C: Study Agreement Template_2024 MEng S

Department of Mechanical and Mechatronic Engineering
Stellenbosch University

Study Agreement for Postgraduate Study (ALL 1st Yr MEng Structured students)

1. Particulars of Student:

1.1. Initials and Surname: _____

1.2. Student number: _____

2. Supervisor: _____

3. Programme: _____

4. Research Assignment Topic: _____

5. Start date of study: _____

6. Date that research assignment proposal is to be submitted: _____

7. Planned completion date of programme: _____

8. Responsibilities:

Once the research assignment proposal has been accepted by the Postgraduate Coordinator, it will be part of the study agreement.

8.1. Responsibilities of the Supervisor

The supervisor agrees to:

8.1.1. To be readily available for appointments with the student, typically _ hour per _____, except when on leave. When the supervisor is on research or study leave, he/she will make arrangements for continued study guidance.

8.1.2. Give regular guidance and feedback about formulation of objectives, literature, methodology and progress.

8.1.3. Arrange financing for equipment and operating costs that is needed by the student for his/her research.

8.1.4. Attempt to arrange bursaries and assistantships to the amount of _____ per year made available in ___ instalments for ___ years for the student, subject to acceptable progress of the student to complete the degree in the allocated time (one year for a Structured Master's degree). This amount excludes any other bursaries or scholarships received during that year (such as bursaries from the University, Faculty, Department, NRF, Harry Crossley fund etc.). These additional bursaries will be monitored by the supervisor(s) in order for the total bursary amount paid to the student to not exceed _____ per annum. This bursary amount arranged by the supervisor may be revised by the supervisor if the student receives other bursaries.

8.1.5. Require no more than 9 hours of work per week not related to this programme (time for one student assistantship of 4 hours per week forms part of these hours).

8.1.6. Attempt to provide a workplace for the student in an office or in a laboratory.

8.2 Responsibilities of the student

The student agrees to:

8.2.1. Do his/her best to finish this study programme in _____ year/s.

8.2.2. Repay all bursaries and assistantships that were arranged by the supervisor and costs incurred by the Department, with interest accrued at the prime interest rate if the agreed upon study programme was not completed successfully within the maximum registration period allowed by

the Faculty of Engineering for the programme. The repayment will be completed within two years of the last day of registration in the programme.

8.2.3. Until the completion of the programme in paragraph 3:

- ✧ Not accept bursaries without the permission of the supervisor except university awarded merit bursaries. All bursaries must be reported to the supervisor as soon as they are awarded, including the amount of said bursaries. This restriction will apply to all bursaries from the National Research Foundation, employers such as Eskom and SASOL, and bursaries from trusts or other donor agencies.
- ✧ Undertake no part/full-time work, assistantships, or modules without the prior permission of the supervisor, which must be applied for in writing.
- ✧ Not change the study plan without the permission of the supervisor. If the student wants to change programme or research project he/she must apply in writing to do so and may forfeit the bursary if it is decided that the new programme/ project is no longer part of the focus of the supervisor or grant.
- ✧ Be at his/her office from _____ to _____ and from _____ to _____ every workday, unless arranged otherwise with the supervisor, and to take no more than _____ workdays vacation per year.
- ✧ Work _____ hours per week on coursework, research, and assistantships.
- ✧ Remain a full-time student for the entire academic year in which bursary is received. If the degree is completed midway through the year, only ____ % of the values of the bursary will be received from it. The supervisor must be informed of any change in the status of registration.
- ✧ Use all equipment, instrumentation, experimental set-ups and laboratories with care and good judgement.
- ✧ Scrupulously comply with all the terms and conditions set out in the Study Guide for the postgraduate programme, as well as Parts 1 and 11 of the University Calendar.
- ✧ Assist with demonstrations associated with the lab's funding support, as well as for the Faculty's Winter week and Open Days.
- ✧ Comply with the Department's requirements for service by postgraduate students (e.g. student assistantships).

8.2.4 Provide the supervisor with the final draft of his/her research assignment (which has been thoroughly checked using spell checker and grammar checker software) at least **6 weeks** before the intended date for submission to the examiners.

8.2.5 **Code of Conduct** guiding the relationship between the supervisor and student – [General Calendar Part 1 – 2024 \(p.72\)](#)

9. **Signatures:**

Student _____ Date _____

Supervisor _____ Date _____

PG Coordinator _____ Date _____

Appendix D: Progress Assessment_2024

Department of Mechanical and Mechatronic Engineering

POSTGRADUATE STUDENT PROGRESS REPORT

(MEng Research & PhD students not graduating December, or March of the following year)

The purpose of this report is for you to reflect on your work, your supervision and the resources available. Please answer it honestly as notification of problems will be viewed as a request for assistance and will help the Department to address the needs of postgraduate students.

- Please complete Sections 1 and 2 and submit these to the Postgraduate Officer (PGO) directly.
- Fill in your name and your supervisor's name in Section 3 and ask your supervisor to complete this. The written report (mentioned in Section 2B) as well as Section 3 should be handed to your supervisor **at least a week before** the actual deadline of **31 October** – please communicate the deadline to him/her by when these documents should be submitted on a OneDrive link received from the PGO.
- Completion of the annual report is essential for your continued enrolment.
- Always use the **latest template from the study guide**.

1. PERSONAL DETAILS

Name Student No.

Address

Telephone No. (Office) Mobile no:

Thesis Title

Supervisor(s)

Degree programme: MEng Research / ☐ PhD ☐

Current Registration: Full time ☐ Part time ☐

Commencement Date (1st yr) Expected Completion Date

2A. STUDENT'S COMMENTS

2.1. Has your study plan been submitted AND accepted? Yes ☐ No ☐

2.2. Has your thesis proposal been submitted AND accepted? Yes ☐ No ☐ n/a ☐

2.3. How many modules have you completed to date?

2.4. How many modules do you still have to complete?

2.5. How often do you consult with your supervisor(s)? Daily ☐ Weekly ☐ Monthly ☐ Other ☐
To what extent has this met your needs?

2.6. Have you presented your work in any formal departmental, university or outside forum in the last year? Give broad details (e.g. departmental seminar, paper to national conference, etc.) Yes ☐ No ☐

2.7. Have you submitted any work for publication in the last year? Yes ☐ No ☐

2.8. Would you like additional help in language / writing / communications skills? Yes ☐ No ☐

Please elaborate

2.9. Does the department provide all necessary facilities for your research? Yes ☐ No ☐

2.10. In your view:

	Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree	
You have diligently and effectively applied yourself to your project.	1	2	3	4	5
You have shown initiative consistent with the requirements of the research programme/course and level of study.	1	2	3	4	5
You have made satisfactory progress throughout the year.	1	2	3	4	5
You have shown that you will be able to complete the research programme by the due date.	1	2	3	4	5
You have made satisfactory progress in writing your thesis/dissertation	1	2	3	4	5
The scope of the project has been sufficiently outlined.	1	2	3	4	5
Your supervisor exhibits the required expertise to support you during this project.	1	2	3	4	5
Your supervisor has provided reasonable guidance.	1	2	3	4	5
You expect to complete by the date indicated in section 1.	1	2	3	4	5

If you have circled a 3 or lower, please elaborate in a separate document and add it to Sec 2A

2.11. Have there been any difficulties affecting the progress of your work? Yes ☐ No ☐
If yes, have any of the following problems significantly limited your progress over the past year?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Academic background | <input type="checkbox"/> Language |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Settling in | <input type="checkbox"/> Access to books/equipment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Experimentation | <input type="checkbox"/> Understanding work expected |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communication with people | <input type="checkbox"/> Health/Personal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mechanical failures/Long deliveries | <input type="checkbox"/> Financial |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Employment commitments | <input type="checkbox"/> Other commitments |

If any boxes have been marked, please indicate in your report (Section 2B) what steps you have taken or will take to help overcome these problems.

2B – REPORT ON RESEARCH PROGRAM

Please attach a report (maximum of 4 pages) on your research progress to date.

This report should be signed by your supervisor.

Please make sure to include:

- A statement of the problem that is to be addressed.
- The overall research work plan (start to finish). This should include a revised Gantt Chart based on real progress, as well as the original (Study plan) Gantt Chart.
- A short summary of results to date.
- The work still to be completed.
- Comments on aspects indicated above.
- How far you have proceeded in writing your thesis.

2C – SIGNATURE

I have witnessed the completed entries above, and I also confirm that I have complied with the University's Code of Conduct for Research.

Name (Print)..... Signature..... Date.....

Advice to Students:

Please remember that throughout your candidature you can expect support and guidance to be readily at hand in your Department or Faculty. If problems arise it is appropriate that you consult with your supervisor and then, if necessary, the Postgraduate Coordinator, Departmental Chairman or Dean.

3. SUPERVISOR'S COMMENTS

Student Name

Supervisor

3.1. Are supervision arrangements for the student finalised for the whole of the coming year? Yes ☐ No ☐

3.2. How often do you consult with your student? Daily ☐ Weekly ☐ Monthly ☐ Other ☐

3.3. Are you satisfied with the frequency of consultation with the student? Yes ☐ No ☐

3.4. Is the department able to provide all necessary facilities for the student's research during the coming year? Yes ☐ No ☐

3.5. In your view:

	Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree	
The student has diligently and effectively applied him/her to his/her project.	1	2	3	4	5
The student has shown initiative consistent with the requirements of the research program/course and level of study.	1	2	3	4	5
The student has made satisfactory progress throughout the year.	1	2	3	4	5
The student has shown that he/she will be able to complete the research programme by the due date.	1	2	3	4	5
The student has made satisfactory progress in writing his/her thesis/dissertation	1	2	3	4	5
The scope of the project has been sufficiently outlined.	1	2	3	4	5
You exhibit the required expertise to support the student during this project.	1	2	3	4	5
You have provided reasonable guidance.	1	2	3	4	5
You expect the student to complete by the date indicated in section 1.	1	2	3	4	5

If you have circled a 3 or lower, please elaborate:

.....

3.6. Have any of the following problems significantly limited the student's progress over the past year?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Academic background | <input type="checkbox"/> Language |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Settling in | <input type="checkbox"/> Access to books/equipment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Experimentation | <input type="checkbox"/> Understanding work expected |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communication with people | <input type="checkbox"/> Health/Personal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mechanical failures/Long deliveries | <input type="checkbox"/> Financial |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Employment commitments | <input type="checkbox"/> Other commitments |

If any boxes have been marked, please indicate what steps have been taken or will be taken to help overcome these problems.

.....

.....

If you have answered no to any of the above questions, please elaborate (use additional sheet if necessary).

3B – SIGNATURE

I have witnessed the completed entries above, and I also confirm that the research is conducted in compliance with the University's Code of Conduct for Research.

Name (Print) Signature Date

NB: Please submit the completed report (Section 3) & the signed (by supervisor) written report of the student on a OneDrive link provided by the PGO in time.

Appendix E: Prescribed structure of the PhD Research Proposal & Executive Summary

A large number of research proposals are considered by the Faculty Board and using a common structure will help those involved to productively review the proposals. PhD candidates must therefore use the following structure for their research proposals that are prepared for consideration by the candidacy panel. This structure is aimed at giving the candidates a clear framework of what the candidacy panel expects. The instructions provided for each section must be adhered to.

Guidelines for Thesis Proposals: Refer to the Technical Writing Guide – Version 2023: Appendix D on SUNLearn ME 414-2024

Research Proposal:

The Research Proposal is a document, limited to 30 pages in length, developed in consultation with the supervisor(s), which must contain at least the following information:

- A descriptive title.
- An exposition of the literature relevant to the proposed PhD study, as well as a synthesis and assessment of the most important themes found in the literature.
- A clear explanation of the objectives of the study, with particular reference to how it corresponds to already published work and what the expected original contribution of the study will be.
- A description of the research methodology that will achieve the stated objectives.
- A broad time framework for the study, typically in terms of 4 to 10 activities, and a brief description of the main focus of each activity.
- A clear explanation of the infrastructure and equipment (including software, equipment, laboratories, operating costs, etc.) that will be required to complete the study, as well as arrangements that have been made to ensure that the infrastructure will indeed be available.
- A critical self-evaluation of the student's progress to date, if applicable. In the case of an upgrade, a discussion of the work that has been completed and what is still required, and a detailed time schedule of work still to be performed.

Executive Summary:

A document, no longer than 600 words, summarizing the Research Proposal, and prepared by the student in consultation with the supervisor(s), according to the template *PG07 - PhD Executive Summary Template*. The following information must be contained in the document:

- The title of the research project.
- Name of the student.
- Name of the supervisor(s).
- A brief description, as well as the aims, of the research project.
- The anticipated unique research contribution(s) of the study, including the titles of the envisaged papers.
- A broad time framework for the study, typically in terms of 4 to 10 activities.
- Gantt chart
- In the case of an upgrade, a summary of the work that has been completed and what is still required, and a detailed time schedule of work still to be performed.

The Candidacy Panel evaluates the proposal based on the following criteria:

RECOMMENDATIONS: CANDIDATE AND RESEARCH PROPOSAL

	YES	NO
The student has satisfactorily demonstrated background knowledge appropriate for the study.		
The student has satisfactorily demonstrated research capabilities appropriate for the study.		
Satisfactory expected original contributions are explained in the research proposal.		
A satisfactory exposition of the literature relevant to the PhD studies, as well as a synthesis and evaluation of the most important themes found in the literature, is given in the research proposal.		
The research methodology, aligned with study's objectives, in the research proposal is satisfactory.		
The research proposal gives a broad time schedule for the study (typically in terms of 4 to 10 activities, with a short description of the focus of each) that is reasonable.		
The research proposal gives a clear explanation of the infrastructure (software, equipment, laboratories, operating costs, etc.) necessary to complete the study, as well as reasonable arrangements to provide it.		
The critical self-evaluation by the student of progress made to date and of his/her research capabilities given in the research proposal is satisfactory.		
The supervisor and co-supervisors (if applicable) have expertise appropriate for the study.		
The Executive Summary is an accurate summary of the Research Proposal.		