



## **THE DA VINCI INSTITUTE FOR TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT**

### **POLICY FOR ORAL DEFENCE**

**Version: 01/2010**

#### **PREAMBLE**

The Da Vinci Institute for Technology Management (The Institute) commits to the pursuit of knowledge and innovation in providing a platform for academic and professional excellence during the research journey of the student.

#### **INTRODUCTION**

The Institute strives to provide academic and research excellence in the goal of professional and academic development of the student.

#### **OBJECTIVES**

The purpose of this policy is to

- Guide The Institute to implement the most appropriate, fair and best way of assessing the student
- To clarify the roles and responsibilities of all the parties involved.

#### **DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS**

The Institute: shall mean The Da Vinci Institute for Technology Management

Student: shall mean a person registered for a qualification at The Institute

## **PROCESS**

### **Assessment report**

- The Student Research Office will inform the supervisors (academic and field) of the agreed upon date as per the scheduled calendar meeting of The Institute in co-ordination with the student.
- The academic supervisor in consultation with the field supervisor will advise the Research Office of the student's intention to submit his/her dissertation/thesis for assessment – whereupon the Research Office will confirm with registry if the student's coursework component is completed.
- The Student Research Office will request the student to submit one soft cover spiral-bound copy to each of the supervisors and one to the Research Office for record purposes.
- The Student Research Office will provide the supervisors with the necessary assessment forms and guideline documents.
- The supervisors will be responsible to submit their assessment reports within 10 working days after the agreed and stipulated date as per calendar meeting of The Institute to the Research Office.
- The academic supervisor will provide the student with feedback on corrections, amendments and the like, to be made to the dissertation/ thesis.
- After the assessment reports on the dissertation or thesis have been received from the academic and field supervisors, the Research Office in close collaboration with the student will organise an oral defence of the dissertation/ thesis.
- The date of the oral defence will be determined by the Research Office within the stipulated time period as set out within the calendar dates of The Institute.
- The Research Office will appoint an external examiner for each PhD candidate once the proposal is accepted. This clause refers specifically to a PhD candidate and therefore excludes MSc candidates.

## **FINALISATION OF DATE**

- In the event of the outcome of the moderation report to be positive, the student would be notified by the Research Office of a suitable date for the oral defence of the dissertation/theses at a time that would suit both the academic and field supervisors.
- The oral defence to be attended simultaneously by academic and field supervisors, as well as an audience of approximately three to five persons who are familiar with the research topic, and/or its relevance to a specific sector or industry (e.g. from the student's place of work, persons recommended by the supervisors or the Research Office) Such individuals should be invited by the student in collaboration with the Research Office.

## **ORAL DEFENCE**

- A chairperson shall be nominated by the Research Office for the oral defence. The Chairperson of such meeting should be a member of The Institute's Management Team.
- Invitations, as agreed upon by the Research Office and the student, to be distributed by the Research Office.
- A Suitable venue, audio-visual equipment and refreshments to be organised by the Research Office/Key Account Manager.
- Documents to be made available by the Research Office to the Chairperson before the commencement of the meeting, including the following:
  - Assessment forms for field and academic supervisors
  - Power point presentation slides of the student
  - Assessment forms for attendees

### ***Meeting to be opened by the Chairperson.***

- The chairperson to welcome and introduce the student and the academic and field supervisors.
- The chairperson to advise on the process of the presentation and procedures to follow.

- The oral defence takes the form of a professional presentation by the student (45 minutes allowed for presentation), followed by a question and answer session. The total length of the oral defence should not exceed the time period of three hours (maximum time given to PhD candidate).
- The assessment should take place within one month of the submission of the dissertation/thesis to the Research Office.
- The oral defence is based on the research work carried out by the student and accounts for 20% of the final score.

***After the presentation:***

- The student and guests are requested by the chairperson to leave the room to allow the supervisors to discuss and finalize their decision.
- The chairperson facilitates the moderation of scores for the written work, in the event of a difference of 5% or more between the two supervisors. If no agreement can be reached in this regard, the dissertation/thesis will be moderated independently of which such score will become the final score for the written work. The scores for the oral presentation also need to be discussed in a similar way if the scores of the field and academic supervisors differ with more than 5%.
- The marks given for the written work and the oral defence will be submitted to the Registrar.
- The student will receive feedback on their performance directly after the oral defence, and will be informed that the final mark will only be made available once the council has ratified the proposed scores.
- The marks for the oral defence remain confidential until ratified by The Council.
- Should the student be found not to be competent in the oral defence, he/she will be given one opportunity to improve such presentation. All students are given three months from notification to finalise such presentation.

The Research Office to request the student to provide a summary ( $\pm$  100 words) on each of the following headings on the date of their oral defense:

**RETURN ON INVESTMENT EVIDENCE RESULTING FROM THEIR RESEARCH**

This is required from each student to establish:

The Return on Investment evidence gained, or to be gained at a personal level on completion of the programme with The Institute

**Community involvement resulting from their participation in the programme (this should already be captured to a large extent in their Exit Level Assignment).** This is required from each student to establish: Their Community Involvement on completion of the programme.

- The Research Office sends a note of thank you to all supervisors, moderators and external examiners for their participation on completion of the oral defence process.

The policy includes the guidelines for the **LOCATION OF AN ORAL DEFENCE** of a dissertation/thesis in centres outside Gauteng

The following guidelines are proposed:

The defence of a dissertation/thesis should preferably take place at Da Vinci House and special motivation should be submitted to the Research Office for consideration of an alternative venue.

Reasons for the consideration of alternative venues may include:

- The physical situation of the candidate
- If the majority of invitees (supervisors, expert invitees) are from a location outside Gauteng

If the defence takes place outside Gauteng the following guidelines will apply:

- One of the following Institute officials should attend: CEO, Registrar or Research Executive
- The candidate will be responsible for travel and accommodation arrangements and costs for such Da Vinci staff
- Skype technology could be considered for international students and The Research Office will make the necessary arrangements to facilitate such engagement.

The following serves as an outline of policies to be consulted in relation with the current policy:

ESSENTIAL SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS:	RELATED DOCUMENTS
Guidelines for academic and field supervisors	Conflict of Interest
Guidelines for theses and dissertations	Complaints Resolution
	Appointment letters
	Student Code of Conduct
	Moderation of supervisor scores s
	Appeals policy and procedures

Date of final acceptance: 16 March 2010 by Research Committee, Da Vinci House.