1. Purpose

To outline general criteria and guidelines for the nomination and appointment of external examiners for the effective management of the external examination process.

2. Policy statement

As part of quality assurance of the examination process Da Vinci, as a Mode 2 university, appoints reputable examiners and adheres to strict quality assurance mechanisms as required by the Council of Higher Education (CHE).

3. Scope of the policy

Requirements of the examination process are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Information</th>
<th>Documents attached</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dissertation</td>
<td>• One external examiner&lt;br&gt;• One internal examiner (academic supervisor)&lt;br&gt;• Oral examination with panel of experts</td>
<td>• External examiner nomination form&lt;br&gt;• External examiner assessment form - Master</td>
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<tr>
<td>after completion of modules for master degree</td>
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<tr>
<td>PhD thesis and submission of a publishable article (new intakes)</td>
<td>• Two external examiners of whom one preferably an international examiner&lt;br&gt;• Oral examination with panel of experts</td>
<td>• External examiner nomination form&lt;br&gt;• External examiner assessment form - PhD</td>
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4. Definitions

The following criteria should be considered during nomination and appointment of an external examiner:
4.1. The nominee should normally be a person who has indisputable and relevant professional and/or academic experience in respect of the research domain or work-based challenge.

4.2. Nominees of master dissertations must be in possession of at least a master degree. A single exception may be permitted in cases where specialist professional or technical expertise in a respective domain is required. In such instance, the Research Committee will be required to formalise a motivation toward such nomination.

4.3. Nominees of PhD theses must be in possession of a doctoral degree. A single exception may be permitted in cases where specialist professional or technical expertise in a respective domain is required. In such instance, the Research Committee will be required to formalise a motivation toward such nomination.

4.4. When considering the appointment of an existing examiner (for both master dissertations and PhD theses), such examiner should have complied with the requirements as stated for external examiners.

4.5. The external examiner must be allowed to provide an independent and critical view of the dissertation or thesis by ensuring that:

a) S/he does not hold an office or fellowship at The Da Vinci Institute or is a student or an associate of The Da Vinci Institute;

b) S/he does not facilitate any module or provides support which forms part of the research programme at The Da Vinci Institute.

Due care should be taken by the Research office that an adequate induction for the role of external examiner is undertaken for each person nominated.

5. Supporting procedures in the nomination and appointment of external examiners

1. Intent to submit dissertation/thesis

Notice of intent to submit a dissertation or thesis for examination is given by the academic supervisor, in writing, via the Key Account Manager (KAM), to the Research Office (RO), at least three months before the dissertation/thesis is to be submitted for examination. The title of the dissertation/thesis as well as a brief research overview (not exceeding 350 words) should be included. If the dissertation or thesis is not submitted within the specified time the
academic supervisor needs to submit a new intent to submit notification closer to the proposed deadline.

2. **Nomination of external examiner(s)**

As soon as the notification is received, the (RO) requests the academic supervisor to nominate the name(s) of an external examiner(s) to be tabled at the next monthly Research Committee (RC) meetings for approval.

3. **Examiner’s availability and assessment of possible conflict of interest**

The RO establishes, prior to submission to RC, whether the examiners are willing and able to conduct the examination and determines possible conflict of interest.

4. **Nomination of examiner(s) at Research Committee meeting**

The RO presents the proposed names of the nominated examiners for discussion and approval at the monthly meetings.

Examiner’s information includes qualifications, abridged curriculum vitae and their full contact details, physical address, telephone, cell and fax numbers, and email address).

5. **Approval of nominated external examiner(s)**

The RC approves or rejects nominated external examiner(s). When rejected the RC the RC proposes an alternative external examiner(s). The date of approval/rejection should be indicated on the External examiner nomination form.
6. Appointment of an examination panel

An examination panel is appointed by the RC simultaneous with the approval of examiners. The examination panel, consisting of the Research Manager (RM) and two (2) senior academic staff members, will be convened in case of major discrepancies between examiners’ reports.

7. Appointment letters to examiners

On receipt of the official letters of appointment from the RO, the examiners should confirm acceptance of appointment within two weeks. Examiners must be appointed independently of each other and their names may not be disclosed to one another.

8. The examination process

On receipt of final dissertation/thesis, the RO oversees the administration of examination process. The examination process will start once

- Both supervisors had returned the Consent forms via the KAMs to the RO;
- The dissertation/thesis is submitted correctly according to Da Vinci Dissertation_Thesis guidelines; and
- Declaration form in front of the dissertation/thesis is signed by the student on submission of document.

9. Submission of the written report and assessment form

Each examiner is required to complete and submit a written narrative report and assessment form on the dissertation or thesis to the RO. Students may not know the names of their examiners until after the oral defence, subject to the examiner(s)’ consent. No communication will be allowed during examination or afterwards related to the outcome of the external examination between the candidate, the supervisors and the external examiners.
10. The oral examination

The RO arranges a date for oral examination with the student and his/her supervisors once all completed written reports and positive feedback have been received from all the external examiners.

All documentation on examination processes are filed in the student’s file.

11. The examination panel’s final decision

In the event of the candidate being unsuccessful in completing his/her dissertation/thesis, as proposed by the external examiner, the examination panel will convene to decide on a way forward for the candidate.

- If the external examiner(s) propose(s) a rework or the inclusion of additional information to the dissertation/thesis, such suggestion(s) will be tabled to the examination panel.
  - If approved by the examination panel, a timeframe will be allocated to the candidate to conclude the dissertation/thesis as proposed.
  - On completion the dissertation/thesis will be resubmitted for assessment by either the same examiner or a different examiner as decided by the examination panel.

- If the external examiner(s) proposed that the candidate fails his/her dissertation/thesis:
  - The examination panel will be accountable towards the RO to propose whether they are in support of the outcome as suggested by the external examiner(s), and therefore confirming that the candidate should not graduate; or
  - The examination panel could advise the RC to consider an alternative assessment of the dissertation/thesis by another external examiner. The examination panel will accept the outcome of the second assessment as the final outcome related to a candidate’s dissertation/thesis and will table such at the RC for approval.

Refer to the related documents:
  a. External examiner nomination form
  b. External examiner assessment form – Master
c. External examiner assessment form – PhD

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