POLICY GUIDELINES: SUPERVISOR AND STUDENT ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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Related documents	
Da Vinci documents (e.g. Policies, Regulations, Guidelines, Contracts) • Policy: Nomination and Appointment of External Examiners • Policy: Students-Supervisor Relationships • Policy: Conducting Ethical Research • Policy: Da Vinci Research Policy Framework • Research Policy Guidelines: External examiners of dissertations and theses	**Other** (e.g. Legislation, DHET and CHE directives and guidelines) • Constitution of the Republic of South Africa: 1996 • Higher Education Act (Act 101 of 1997) • CHE: Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) Criteria for Programme Accreditation: November, 2004 • SAQA: National Policy and Criteria for Designing and Implementing Assessment for NQF Qualifications and Part Qualifications and Professional Designations in South Africa
Website address of this document:	**www.davinci.ac.za**

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1   Introduction

This policy guideline forms part of the set of quality management policies of The Da Vinci Institute for Technology Management.

Da Vinci offers outcomes based, distance education opportunities. This policy guideline details the principles and processes that will ensure that learning programme offerings are aligned to the principles of a Mode 2 higher education institution, whilst adhering to the required academic standards and empowering students with the knowledge, skills and values to contribute to their communities, society and economy of the future.

The policy guideline serves to inform supervisors of students of The Da Vinci Institute of its approach and conceptual frames as a Mode 2 institution in order to give guidance in respect of the dissertation/thesis. The Institute is of the view that the student's final research contribution should lead to innovation and transformation of the self, the community or industry and society at large. The rationale for this view is that Da Vinci strives to contribute, as a micro-system, to the macro ecosystem in meaningful ways.

2   Purpose of the Guideline

The purpose of these guideline is to explain:
- The characteristics of a Mode 2 institution
- The supervisor's role and responsibilities
- The student's role and responsibilities
- Supervision guidelines
- The Code of Conduct to be signed
- Project Agreement

3   Characteristics of Da Vinci as a Mode 2 Higher Education Institution

The Da Vinci Institute as a Mode 2 learning organisation, acknowledges the need for supervisors and students to jointly work together in solving the research problem; or in

addressing an issue around a particular application in the community or industry and society. At The Institute, this is encapsulated in a work-based challenge (WBC) situated within each student's theoretical paradigm. Applying Mode 2 problem-solving methodologies involves a close interaction of various systems and people during a more reflexive process of knowledge creation. Within this context, research should have a purpose, a noticeable application and outcome and potentially have an impact on the community; be it locally, nationally and/or internationally.

This means that for a Master degree the student should demonstrate that s/he has mastered advanced thinking, can critically engage with literature, and develop a research design and methods to collect data, make sense of it, and apply the findings on local and / or national levels.

For a doctoral degree the student should, in addition to the above, critique current theory, identify and contribute to the creation of new theory. The contribution should be tested and workable; and be able to be applied by organisations or communities on national and international level.

The aim and outcome of learning and research at Da Vinci should show the following characteristics

- 🌼 ***Knowledge generation in the context of application***. New knowledge is generated within the context of inconsistencies, imbalances or gaps identified in a real-life context. Contributions to knowledge should therefore be applicable to the self, enterprise or community and society.
- 🌼 Research is undertaken through a ***trans-disciplinary*** approach. This approach is evident when epistemologies integrate and move beyond discipline-specific approaches to define problems and identify unique solutions. Knowledge is generated across disciplinary boundaries. Research is conducted with openness and flexibility.
- 🌼 In terms of the concept of co-creation, ***heterogeneity***, (or variety), is embraced. This means that research takes place over a wide range of areas

and actively seeks innovative ways of design and the methodology of the research undertaken. Research designs are viewed from different angles to find a solution to the issue at hand.

◦ Research outcomes also display ***reflexivity and accountability***. Students and supervisors recognise an awareness of the impact and implications of the research issue within the self, the organisation and the broader community. The need for research on the issue, the goal and the outcome involve social accountability

◦ ***Quality control*** is evident in the research**.** Research is guided by a substantial assurance of practice and usefulness. It should show validity, demonstrate evidence-based application and contribution towards the self, the industry or society and ecosystem.

4   Implications for the Supervisor(s) and Student

Da Vinci facilitates an integrated research journey of self-discovery. Students and supervisors should participate in each other's concrete experiences with a view of evolving a real-life, 'work based challenge' argument, issue or research problem, into a fully-fledged academic research report. The realisation of such a research problem originates from the researcher's own reality (ontology) and experience of the phenomenon. This leads to a 'burning desire' to discover new ways of seeing the world, and in proposing how things 'should be' (epistemology), by addressing the issue or challenge. The theoretical framework, research design and methodology are applied to find a possible solution and to create an application as outcome. At the same time, such a challenge should focus on the professional development of the individual, use a trans-disciplinary engagement, embrace a heterogeneous understanding of the world, and accept accountability for the research outcome within the social system.

Research is thus an advanced endeavour in which the abovementioned is taken into account throughout the entire research period. Actions are measured against the impact on and context of the self, the community or enterprise, the society and the world or eco-sphere.

5 Appointment and Role of the Supervisor(s)

Supervision at Da Vinci requires an additional awareness of and responsibly towards the student transforming the self, others and social context within an eco-system. Workshops are:

- facilitated and not taught, with the emphasis on self-discovery through a number of hands-on activities
- followed by research on a real-world issue, building on what has been discovered in the past
- cooperative spaces where students amongst themselves, and students and supervisors, learn from each other's experiences as co-creators of new theory in seeking to find relevant applications relating to research problems
- directed in the hope that it will result in the ability to apply the content and research in a real-life situation

5.1 Appointment of Supervisor(s)

Each student has the support of an academic supervisors and, if required, a Subject Matter Expert (SME) supervisor:

An **Academic supervisor**, allocated by the Research Committee, is appointed based on the following criteria:

- Hold at least an appropriate master or a doctoral degree to supervise master students and a doctoral degree to supervise doctoral students
- Have particular expertise in the field of the dissertation or thesis
- Preferably has already supervised at least two master or doctoral students successfully
- Undertake to apply the relevant Da Vinci theoretical paradigms, methodological, supervisory, dissertation, thesis and ethical guidelines
- Attend at least one continuous professional development workshop on effective supervision

A **SME supervisor**, identified and nominated by the student, but approved by the Research Committee is appointed based on the following criteria:

- While not essential, SME supervisors should preferably have a relevant degree at master or doctoral level, or be an expert in the field of research
- The ability to identify and promote the application of the research and its findings to the work environment and in effect, facilitating the dissertation or thesis quality
- Should have shown significant awareness of the technical and managerial aspects of the project within the context of the work environment, and be in a position to assess the contribution of the student to the project
- Attend at least one continuous professional development workshop on effective supervision

5.2   Responsibilities of Academic and SME Supervisors

The **Academic supervisor** responsibilities:

The academic supervisor is allocated by the Research Committee and serves as the 'accountable' entity with regard to the scientific process and quality of the research; and will:

- Serve as key communication node with regard to all matters relating to the progress of the student and the research project between the Research Office and Programme Coordinator on the one hand, and the student on the other hand
- Guide the student in terms of the required technical, project management and academic requirements of the project
- Liaise with the SME supervisor to ensure the research project is adequately directed in respect of its academic and industry quality and relevance
- Monitor progress, assess effort, competence and comprehension, as well as provide the student with feedback on submitted sections of the draft dissertation or thesis
- Read the completed dissertation or thesis in terms of the Da Vinci guidelines in order to give consent to submit
- Assess professional relevance of the research

)   Participate, with the SME supervisor (if appointed) and a panel of peers, an oral examination in accordance with the Da Vinci guidelines

)   Support the student in writing and publishing a research article in collaboration with the Research Office

A supervisor will be expected to spend approximately 40 to 80 hours (including face-to-face, e-mail, etc.) per student in the course of the life-cycle of a dissertation or thesis, depending on how much support the student needs.

The supervisor's contribution is of such a nature that publications (journal articles, conference papers, etc.) resulting from the dissertation or thesis acknowledge the supervisor as second author if the article was co-created.

If appointed, the **SME supervisor** is responsible for:

)   With the academic supervisor, monitor and support the student on a regular basis

)   Guide the student in terms of technical, managerial, and other general aspects related to the specific specialist field

)   Liaise with the academic supervisor to ensure the research project is adequately directed with respect to its business and/or industry relevance

)   Monitor progress of the dissertation or thesis in terms of the Da Vinci guidelines as provided

)   Participate, with the academic supervisor and a panel of peers, an oral examination in accordance with the Da Vinci guidelines

The above functions will require the following commitments:

)   An initial meeting between the student, academic supervisor and SME supervisor (if appointed), to ensure the research is viable, meets the academic requirements and is of business and/or industry relevance, and that the necessary resources are available

- Subsequent three-way meetings as and when necessary which can be done electronically via the student learning system or by means of face-to-face meetings

- Student meetings with the supervisors to discuss his/her ideas, progress, problems – depending on the student and availability of the supervisor – approximately one hour per month

- Assessment and feedback to the student during research period

- Final approval and sign-off, giving permission to submit the dissertation/thesis for examination

- Participate in the oral examination – 2 hours.

5.3   Student and Supervisor Meetings

Most students will need guidance, particularly in the first part of the journey. The first, introductory meeting is therefore important to set the tone for future engagements.

Since the research journey will involve a number of years, it is necessary that

- Expectations are clarified (student, academic supervisor, and SME supervisor, if appointed)

- Roles and responsibilities are clarified (student, academic supervisor, and SME supervisor, if appointed)

- Agreement on plans. Should plans change, agreement should be reached between all parties

- Put in writing that which was formally agreed upon

- Sign the formal Code of Conduct

- Student to complete a detailed project plan for the study, as agreed with academic supervisor (and SME supervisor, if appointed).

5.4   Follow-up Meetings between Student and Supervisor(s)

Supervisor(s) are expected to

- Give guidance regarding all aspects of the research project

- Identify training and learning needs, for example, academic writing skills
- Maintain contact through regular monthly meetings or email
- Remain accessible to the student at agreed upon times when advice may be needed
- Agree on the completion dates of stages of the work so that the dissertation or thesis may be submitted within the scheduled time

In addition, **supervisor(s)** are expected to:

- Read submissions of written work as agreed, and return such work with constructive criticism and within a reasonable period
- Provide quarterly reports on the student's progress to the Research Office
- Arrange to work through the dissertation/thesis with the student at least one month prior to submission
- Advise on appropriate dissemination activities (including publication of articles)
- Inform the Research Office and the Programme Coordinator of the intention to submit three months prior to the dissertation/thesis submission deadline
- Ensure that examiners' comments are incorporated into the final dissertation/thesis, when required
- Adhere to, and ensure that the student adheres to, the Institute's regulations governing research integrity, academic misconduct, and ethical standards

Students, on the other hand, are expected to:

- Discuss with the supervisors preferred ways of working and agree on a schedule of meetings
- Take the initiative in raising problems or difficulties
- Carry out research in an ethical way and in line with the Institute's ethical standards.
- With the supervisor, ensure that the Ethical Clearance form is completed and signed

◗   Maintain the progress of the work in accordance with the stages agreed with the supervisor

6   Student Responsibilities

Although it is rather obvious, it is necessary to emphasise that the student is the owner of his/her research and the key role player in the research and innovation journey. It therefore follows that the main responsibility for his/her progress and reaching the destination (of a master or doctoral degree), lies with the student.

The following characterise the functions, role and responsibilities of a postgraduate student:

◗   Primary responsibility for initiating and completing all phases of the dissertation/thesis project

◗   Commitment to learning, discovery/innovation and productivity

◗   Dedication and commitment to the research project, including the theme, design and project management plan

◗   Honouring of all agreements with the supervisor(s)

◗   Regular feedback to all stakeholders (supervisor(s), Research Office, Programme Coordinator and employer, if appropriate)

◗   Manage work, personal and social life knowing that sacrifices will be necessary over the short term

◗   Adhere to Da Vinci's regulations governing research integrity, academic misconduct, and ethical standards

◗   Attend the Institute's additional student support and refresher workshops.

7   Launching of Dissertation and Thesis Writing Process

The research proposal is reviewed by the Research and Design lecturer. If the proposal qualifies (at least 60%), it is forwarded to the Research Committee for approval of the title and the topic, and allocation to supervisor(s). The Programme Coordinator will, upon approval of the research proposal, communicate with both supervisors and student accordingly.

The process will be launched by a first meeting between the student and both supervisors following the guidelines below:

)   The student should take the initiative to organise the first meeting with both supervisors

)   The envisaged research and project plan should be acceptable to all parties in terms of its content, relevance and viability; ensuring that resources are available to for the student to conduct the research programme

)   All parties should commit themselves explicitly to the project plan (and eventual amendments of it, where required)

The meeting should spend time clarifying all relevant aspects of the research design, including literature survey, critical review of The Institute's conceptual frameworks as these relate to the study and the research design and methodology. The dissertation or thesis structure and any other aspects that may arise, should be clear and agreement should be reached on how to achieve the outcomes as stipulated.

All parties should agree to a time schedule and how the schedule will be monitored.

8   Study Progress and Process

The following notes may be relevant to both supervisor and student, since student progress is a key performance area at institutional and personal level, and obviously, needs to be monitored – with the necessary guidance where:

)   All postgraduate students complete an induction process that covers an introduction/refresher session dealing with the research process and the requirements for the dissertation or thesis

)   Identify the roles and responsibilities of supervisor(s) and student: these Policy Guidelines are made available to all students as part of their information package

)   Students design a research project plan (including a time schedule) for the research period

)   Students who are new to the research process often need guidance in tackling some aspects of the research such as knowing where to start, how to carry out

a literature search, etc. For this reason, regular Continuing Professional Development and refresher workshops are made available as per the annual schedule

9 Relationship between Supervisor(s) and Student

The student and the supervisor(s) must work in close collaboration for the duration of the research project. Experience has shown that the most productive relationships are built on the following assumptions:

⋑ It is an evolving and dynamic relationship

⋑ It consists of open and committed communication (face-to-face and through e-media)

⋑ It is built on mutual trust

⋑ Each party takes co-responsibility for the outcomes

⋑ The relationship exists against the background of a Code of Conduct which is manifested in, amongst other things, the research project management plan.

⋑ Submission of the agenda for each meeting by the student at least one week prior to the meeting

⋑ Agreeing on final agenda

⋑ Sticking to the agenda at the meeting

⋑ Agreeing on actions for the next meeting.

10 The Research Office

The Research Office provides guidance and support to all students and their supervisors. In this regard, the Research Office acts in close consultation with the academic and SME supervisors. This close interaction is aimed at promoting quality and becoming competitive at a national and international level. The research processes and communication between supervisors and students are closely monitored to ensure research support to all parties; and leads to interventions when necessary.

11 The Postgraduate Office

The Postgraduate Office is responsible for all the administrative processes related to the programme, the student and the supervisors. Together with the Programme Coordinator, the Office ensures that the programme is managed efficiently.

12 Student/Supervisor(s) Code of Conduct

STUDENT/SUPERVISOR(S) CODE OF CONDUCT

Academic Supervisor _____
Subject Matter Expert Supervisor_____
Student_____ Student number _____ Group: _____

I/We, the undersigned, agree to adhere to the ground rules as stipulated below and undertake to respect the rules. If I/we consider the rules not acceptable I/we will raise those concerns at the first meeting and request all parties to reformulate the rules according to mutual agreement. Until such time that reformulation is not requested I/we agree that the stipulated ground rules will apply for the duration of the entire study.

Academic supervisor responsibilities
- Discuss with the Subject Matter Expert (SME) supervisor (if appointed) and student preferred ways of working and agreeing on a contact/ research project management schedule.

- Give guidance regarding all aspects of the study, including academic writing skills.

- Maintain contact with student and the SME supervisor (if appointed), on a monthly basis.

- Be accessible to the student at agreed upon times when advice may be needed.

- Give direction on the completion dates of successive stages of the work so that the dissertation/thesis can be submitted within the scheduled time.

- Adhere to, and ensure the student adheres to, the Da Vinci's regulations governing research integrity, academic misconduct, and ethical standards.

- Attend at least one Continuing Professional Development (CPD) workshop for supervisors.

- Take the initiative in raising problems or difficulties.

- Maintain the progress of the work in accordance with the stages agreed upon in the research project management schedule.

- Inform the Research Office and the Programme Coordinator three months in advance of student's intent to submit.

- Read the completed dissertation/thesis in terms of the Da Vinci guidelines and complete consent form to be sent to the Research Office and Programme Coordinator with the final version of the dissertation/thesis.

- Participate in, with the SME supervisor (if appointed), an oral examination in accordance with the Da Vinci guidelines.

SME supervisor responsibilities

- If appointed, with the academic supervisor, monitor and support the student.

- Guide the student in terms of technical, managerial, and other general aspects related to the specific specialist field.

- Liaise with the academic supervisor to ensure the project is adequately directed with respect to its business and/or industry relevance.

- Monitor progress in order to assess effort, competence and comprehension.

- Facilitate or promote the implementation of the findings of the dissertation/thesis.

- Participate in, with the academic supervisor, an oral examination in accordance with the Da Vinci guidelines.

- Attend at least one Continuing Professional Development (CPD) workshop for supervisors.

Student responsibilities

- Adhere to Da Vinci's regulations governing research integrity, academic misconduct, and ethical standards.

- Discuss with the supervisor(s) preferred ways of working and agreeing on a schedule of meetings.

- Take the initiative in raising challenges or difficulties.

- Maintain the progress of the work in accordance with the stages agreed with the supervisor(s).

- Submit monthly written progress report.

- Provide a final draft of the dissertation/thesis to supervisor(s) for review and consent before submission.

- Update project plan with supervisor(s) as and when required in order for it to remain current.

- Put the agreed contract in writing.

Progress meetings

- Submission of agenda for the meeting by the student at least one week prior to the meeting.

- Agreeing on final agenda.

- Sticking to the agenda at the meeting.

- Agreeing on actions for the next meeting.

Academic Supervisor: _____Signature:_____ Date: _____

Subject Matter Expert Supervisor: _____Signature:_____
Date: _____

Student: _____   Signature: _____   Date: _____

Note:
Please attach a signed project plan to this document according to your own requirements as in example 1 or create a project plan by way of a software application, such as MS Projects, see example 2 on next page.

13 Research Project Plan

13.1 Research project plan - example of MS Word

	Task	Duration	Start	Finish	Student/super visor
✓	Meeting with supervisors		2014-06-23	2014-06-23	NM,DG,ST
✓	Submit research proposal for review	30 days	2014-07-23	2014-07-23	NM
✓	Research proposal review and feedback	10 days	2014-07-24	2014-08-01	DG, ST
	Work on Chapter 1		2014-08-03		NM

13.2 Research project plan - example created in MS project
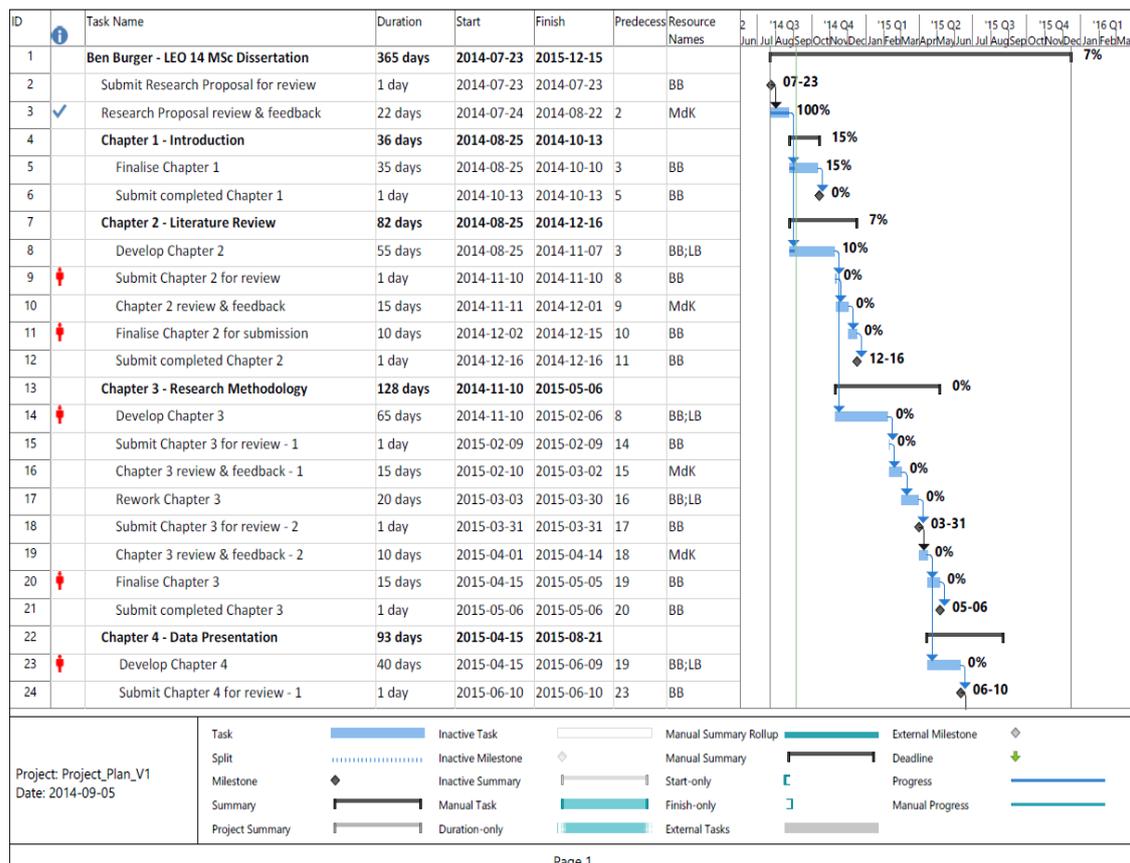
14 LIST OF RESEARCH REFERENCES

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- *Applications.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

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15 Version Control

Author	Revision
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