

Guidelines for Completing a ACA48 Progress and Planned Activity (PPA) form

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Context

The progress and planned activity form (PPA) builds on the memorandum of understanding (MOU) that you completed in the first year of registration for your degree. Similar to the MOU, the PPA is a formal agreement between a postgraduate student (Masters or Doctoral) and their supervisor regarding their expectations of each other, and the research requirements for completion of the degree. The intention of the PPA is for students and supervisors to review progress in the previous year, and agree on plans for the forthcoming year, prior to re-registration. This is also an opportunity to update any of the agreements made when you signed the MOU. While this document may seem daunting to you, it is important that you complete each section with care. In addition to helping you plan your Masters or Doctoral Research programme, the MOU and PPA will be referred to in the case of any conflict or dispute arising during the course of your study at UCT. Common disputes includes issues over who funds research, authorship, intellectual property rights, insufficient contact time, dissatisfaction with a student's progress and lack of timely feedback from supervisors.

In addition to **reviewing progress** made in the previous year, students and supervisors should agree on **the milestones** that need to be achieved so that students can graduate in the expected time for a Masters (2 years) or Doctoral (3 years) degree. This is important, as postgraduate funding for students is limited to 2 years for a Masters, and 3 years for a Doctoral degree. Your supervisor will also refer to the milestones that were set, when **assessing your academic progress** at the end of the year.

Students and supervisors need to have a discussion on what **funding** the postgraduate student has to support their living expenses and tuition fees for the year. There should also be a clear understanding of what financial resources are available to cover the **cost of research** incurred by the student.

It is also important to agree on a number of important **intellectual property issues**, including authorship, use of third party data, plans for management of research data, and compliance with UCT's intellectual policy guidelines.

It is essential that students and supervisor discuss whether the proposed research requires **ethical approval, permits to collect material, and biosafety approval** prior to commencement of any research.

The rest of this document is intended to assist you with the completion of each section of the PPA.

Note: This form is a writable pdf; and different fields will expand depending on what options you select.

A: Student and Supervisor details

A1-A2: This section captures important details for the student, including contact information.

A3: Jointly awarded or co-badged degrees are normally between a foreign University and UCT. A formal agreement has to be in place if this option is selected. The following URL provide a reference for information on jointly awarded and co-badged degrees:

https://www.uct.ac.za/downloads/uct.ac.za/about/policies/Joint_Degrees_Policy.pdf

A4: You should note the provisional title for your research dissertation/thesis as specified in the MOU, and whether it needs to be updated.

A5: It is important to acknowledge that you know what the word limit is of your Masters dissertation or Doctoral thesis. Special permission has to be obtained from your Dean if you exceed this word limit.

A6: The full contact details and staff number of the supervisor (and co-supervisors) should be recorded.

It is UCT's policy that the primary supervisor must be a member of the UCT staff, appointed by the Faculty Board. The primary supervisor should have appropriate expertise in the area of research available to supervise the candidate's research, and normally (but not necessarily) be based in the same department as the student.

The primary supervisor is responsible for the largest proportion of academic supervision and ensuring that the student is given guidance about the nature of research, developing the research proposal, ensuring that it meets the standard expected for the degree (Masters or PhD), and planning of the research programme. The primary supervisor should advise on suitable sources of literature, attendance at taught classes, requisite techniques (including arranging for instruction where necessary), issues of plagiarism and compliance with UCT's rules and administrative requirements including assisting with and agreeing to the MOU and PPA each year.

Senior Scholars may continue to undertake primary supervision, as they are on T2 contracts. However all other retirees may not continue as the sole supervisor, and must appoint a UCT staff member either as a co-supervisor or as an administrative supervisor. Honorary appointments and Postdoctoral Fellows are generally excluded from primary supervision, but can co-supervise. In rare cases it may be appropriate for a member of PASS staff to supervise or co-supervise a student. In this case, a motivation must be given and permission sought from their Head of Department and the Dean.

In the event that the Primary supervisor is external to UCT then an 'Administrative supervisor' or Co-supervisor needs to be nominated and indicated in the university administrative systems.

B: Evaluation of Progress Over The Last Cycle

This is an important section where a student reports on the progress made in their Masters or Doctoral Research, measured against the milestones set in the MOU (or PPA) in the previous year. It is an opportunity for a student to take stock of their progress, and assess whether they are on track to complete their degrees on time (2 years for a Masters by Research, 3 years for a PhD). Students should complete this section, and forward it to their supervisors for comment. Students are given the opportunity to respond to any comments made by their supervisor. It is important that these sections are completed thoroughly, accurately, fairly and frankly.

C: Supervisor's expectations and commitments

C1: Supervisor's expectations.

Having reviewed the progress made by the student in the previous year (Section B), the supervisor should describe in this section what research milestones should be met in the current year to ensure that the student completes their degree within the expected time for a Masters (2 years) and Doctoral (3 years) degree. If a student has already exceeded these expected times, then milestones should be discussed and set to ensure that the degree is finished as soon as possible.

C.2 Supervisor's commitments

It is important the Supervisor indicates what their style of supervision is, and how often they are available to meet with students. It is particularly important to agree on the turnaround time for any written work submitted by a student to their supervisor for comment.

C.3 Supervision leave arrangements

Supervisors should inform students if they plan to take Study and Research Leave, and what arrangements are in place for supervision while they are away.

D. Expectations and plans of the student

D.1 Expectations from the supervisor(s) and the department

The student should use this section to describe any specific expectations that they have with regard to supervision by their supervisor, as well as from the Department in which they are registered. For example, a student might require access to specific facilities to complete their research, or may want to be given the opportunity to teach in tutorials and practicals.

Agreed plan and broad timetable:

An outline is given which can be used as a template to describe the timetable for the forthcoming year.

(a) Literature review completed by:

(b) Data collection completed by (where applicable):

(c) Data analyses completed by (where applicable):

(d) Submission of dissertation/thesis completed by:

This is a suggested outline, and depending on the stage of your degree, it might be more appropriate to set some milestones by which the different research components of your research topic are completed. It might be more helpful for the planning of your thesis to give more detail under each heading, rather than simply a date.

D2: Comment by supervisor on this plan

Your supervisor should use this section to comment on your research plan for the year outlined in D1, and on the timeframes for the completion of your dissertation/thesis.

D3: Logistics.

This section should be completed if the student has any special requirements for their proposed research, for example support for field work, or support needed if consulting communities, storing data, access to high performance computing.

D4: Employment and teaching commitments at UCT by the student

A student and supervisor should agree on whether any teaching or employment opportunities are offered to the student, and what mentorship or support will be available to the student, as well as what the expectations of their duties, and payment will be.

D5: Skills required, courses and classes

It is important for a supervisor to discuss whether any specific skills are required for a student to master during the duration of a research masters and doctorate. For example, a supervisor might recommend that a student should attend a particular course, or acquire specific skills to succeed in their proposed research. A student and supervisor should agree on who will cover the costs of these courses.

D6: Student's leave arrangement

It is important to complete this section so that there is no misunderstanding between the student and supervisor on leave taken during the masters/doctoral degree.

The section on Student's presence on campus is to get an idea of whether the student will be on campus daily (and therefore requires space and facilities to do their research), or whether they will be working off-campus, coming to campus on a weekly or monthly basis to consult with their supervisor. Some students are employed full-time while doing their masters/doctoral degree, and thus might only be on campus once a month. The intention is for the student and supervisor to agree on what is reasonable for the proposed research degree.

E: Funding

The intention of this section is for the students and supervisor to discuss what funding has been secured to i) support the student during their studies, and ii) to cover the running expenses of the proposed research. It is important to have this discussion so that students and supervisors are 100% clear on who is covering the costs of a student's living expenses (including fees) and research.

Students should be proactive in applying for bursaries/scholarships to support their living expenses, by applying to UCT, and external grant agencies. Supervisors should indicate here if they have a student scholarships available as part of their research grants, including the value. It is important to note the expected dates of disbursement, and what the requirements are for renewal of scholarship funding. This can be referred to during the course of the year if the payment of scholarships is late,

and the supervisor should be proactive in assisting the student in resolving why payment of their bursary/scholarship is late.

It is very important that supervisors and students have a frank discussion on how much it will cost to cover the proposed research, and how these costs will be covered. In some cases, a supervisor might have a research grant with a specified budget to cover the expenses. In other cases, there might not be any research grants available, and the student might have to cover their own expenses. In either case, the student and supervisor should agree, prior to registration, on where funding to cover research expenses is coming from, and whether it is sufficient to cover the cost of research.

F: Authorship, Third Party Data and Intellectual Property Issues

F1: Authorship

Whilst this might seem a low priority at the outset of your Masters/Doctoral research project, it is very important that issues of authorship and intellectual property are agreed on, prior to research commencing. Disputes over authorship occur frequently and it is important to have agreements in place. In addition to noting that you are aware of UCT's guidelines on authorship, there is space for you to specify any particular agreement that you have with your supervisor on the order of authorship, and whom will be the corresponding author. Traditions differ from discipline to discipline, and there is no 'one size fits all' advice.

F2: Third party data

In some cases, researchers make use of data from other research groups, and approval might be required, or there might be restraints on the publication of the data. You should indicate NO if you are not using data from third parties. You should indicate YES, if you are using data from third parties, and should make a note if permission has been obtained, and whether there are specific restraints that comes with the use of this data.

F3: Research Data Management Policy

UCT approved a Research Data Management (RDM) policy in 2018 which commits research at UCT to meet the FAIR principle to enable effective sharing of data that directly substantiate published research findings. This means that data generated by students (from Masters' level upwards), and staff at UCT should be findable, accessible, interoperable and reusable (FAIR). This is of course subject to legitimate limitations on data availability, such as privacy, confidentiality, and intellectual property rights. Further information on the RDM policy, and support services to assist you with data storage and data management are available online at:

<http://www.researchsupport.uct.ac.za/managing-research-data>

Other resources include

[Further information](#) on UCT's Research Data Management Policy

[Guidelines](#) on how to prepare your research data management plan

F4: UCT Intellectual Property (IP) Policy

This section has been included in the MOU (or PPA) to make sure that you are fully aware of UCT's policy on Intellectual Property (IP), before you start your research. A more detailed overview and guidelines on the policy governing IP at UCT can be found [here](#).

Your research has the potential to generate intellectual products or property (IP) that has commercial value. This IP includes inventions, discoveries and other developments of a technical nature, as well as tangible research property, such as drawings, designs and diagrams, biological organisms and software. Patents are usually drawn up to protect this IP. It is important to familiarize yourself with UCT's policy on IP prior to starting your research, so that you know what to do when you make a discovery, and what the arrangements are for who owns and benefits from the IP.

You should have a conversation with your supervisor about any IP that might be generated during your studies. You need to check whether the funding of your research comes with any strings attached, for eg, has the IP been assigned to the funder? If there are no obligations to the funder of your research, then with a few exceptions, any IP arising from research conducted at UCT is owned by UCT.

Read the [UCT Inventor's Guide](#) if you would like more information on how the process of generating a patent to protect the IP generated in your research works.

G: Ethics in Research and Biosafety

Your research may require a permit to collect material, or ethical approval to conduct the research.

It is essential that you have permits in place to collect material, and approval for ethics and biosafety prior to starting your research. These permits should be attached to this PPA (if being approved manually) or uploaded to PeopleSoft (if being approved on-line). This is important, as the Faculty requires proof that ethical approval has been obtained. Furthermore, an examiner may request proof of ethical approval during the examination process.

You should carefully check what your Faculty's requirements are for ethical approval. Additional information on UCT policies on ethics and biosafety, as well as application forms, can be found at [the UCT Research Support Hub](#).

H: Presentation of research findings and submission of the thesis/dissertation

H1: It may seem like a long way away, but it is important that you understand what is required when you write up and submit your Masters dissertation or Doctoral thesis for examination. Students need to be very careful that they do not plagiarize any work that they submit for examination, as this can lead to immediate failure and disciplinary action.

H2: This section also includes instructions on how to submit your thesis, and to load a copy onto the libraries OpenUCT site. All Masters dissertations and Doctoral theses, are published on the OpenUCT site so that they are freely available for other researchers to read.

In rare cases, there might be an embargo on you loading your dissertation/thesis to the OpenUCT site, and you should check with your supervisor whether any such restrictions apply to the research that you are going to be doing. Good reasons for why there might be a short delay in publishing include, for example, further time required to protect the intellectual property generated in your research, or there may be restraints due confidentiality of the data you used from a 3rd party (see Section E2) in your research.

If this applies to you, you will need to apply to your Faculty (Masters students) or the Doctoral Degrees Board (PhD students) for permission to delay the publication of your dissertation or thesis.

More information on what reasons are acceptable to UCT, and how to access MSc001 (Masters) or DB008 (Doctoral) forms to apply for delayed publication, can be found [here](#).

H3: Finally, many UCT students are funded by the National Research Foundation (NRF). We have an agreement that all students who are recipients of NRF scholarships will notify the NRF where their dissertation/theses are lodged within a month of graduation. You need to acknowledge that you are aware of this rule, and that you may have to repay your scholarship if you don't submit the link from OpenUCT (where your dissertation/thesis is lodged) to them.

I: Social Media

Improper use of social media platforms can be very damaging to the reputation of students, staff and the University. This section is for a student to acknowledge that they have read UCT's guidelines on the use of social media and will use it responsibly.

J: Dispute resolution procedures and communication channel

A student-supervisor relationship, like any human relationship, can run into trouble. This is why it is important that you describe what respective expectations are in the MOU. If a dispute does arise over what you have agreed, or a break down occurs in your relationship, try and resolve it as soon as possible. It is usually best to resolve disputes informally, and then to follow more formal methods if this is unsuccessful.

You need to read [UCT's guidelines on the conflict resolution process](#) so that you know what to do if any disputes arise. You should also check with your supervisor whether there are any additional Faculty specific guidelines.

K: Approval by all parties, including HOD/Dean/Dean's nominee

Everyone should sign or approve this document (via PeopleSoft) once it has been completed.

In the Faculty of Science, Course Work Masters students should print out a hard copy of the PPA, and after signing it, forward it to their supervisor and HOD for approval. Any permits for ethics or collection of materials should be attached.

Research Masters and Doctoral students should upload the completed document to PeopleSoft, for approved on-line. All permits for ethics or collection of materials should also be uploaded to PeopleSoft.

The approved PPA will be referred to when considering your progress at the end of the year, and if any disputes arise.

Saving your ACA48 PPA

Please remember to save your completed ACA48 PPA with the following file name, before uploading it to PeopleSoft. This will make subsequent administration a lot easier for the staff in the Faculty office.

Student number_Student surname; for example MDGANN004_Midgley_PPA 2019.

8th January 2019: These draft guidelines were written by Prof Nicola Illing and still await approval by the Board for Graduate Studies. They have been circulated to assist with Registration in 2019.

Appendix A: Board for Graduate Studies Categories of Supervisors and Guidelines

Appendix A: Categories of supervisors (these are the new updated guidelines were approved by the Prof Michael Kyobe, Chair of the BfGS and the Doctoral Degrees Board on 18th December 2018)

GUIDELINES TO CATEGORIES OF SUPERVISOR		
FOR FULL RESEARCH MASTERS & DOCTORAL DEGREES, AND THE RESEARCH COMPONENT OF THE DISSERTATION COMPONENT OF A MASTERS BY COURSEWORK & DISSERTATION (excluding Professional Masters and Honours degrees)		
INTERNAL	PRIMARY SUPERVISOR	CO-SUPERVISOR/S
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The primary supervisor is a UCT staff member¹ appointed by Faculty Board who should have appropriate expertise in the area of research available to supervise the candidate's research, and normally (but not necessarily) is a staff member in the same department as that in which the student is registered. It is expected that a supervisor has attained at least the level of degree qualification for which the candidate is registered. Where a person nominated as a supervisor does not have such a level of degree, there must be evidence of research and research-supervision and a strong motivation indicating that the person will be able to supervise the candidate. A primary supervisor who retires may not continue as the sole supervisor, and must appoint a UCT staff member either as a co-supervisor or as an administrative supervisor. In such cases the retired supervisor must be provided with the necessary third-party access to UCT systems (e.g. to email, departmental sites and the library). 2) The primary supervisor is responsible for the largest proportion of academic supervision and ensuring that the student is given guidance about the nature of research, developing the proposal, the standard expected, planning of the research programme, literature and sources, attendance at taught classes, requisite techniques (including arranging for instruction where necessary), issues of plagiarism and compliance with UCT's rules and administrative requirements including assisting with approving progress codes each year (see 5 below), and 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) An internal co-supervisor is a UCT staff member or postdoctoral fellow appointed by the Faculty Board when a primary supervisor and student seeks the benefit of the expertise of a specialist to supervise parts of the thesis to complement his/her expertise. 2) An internal co-supervisor has expertise in the respective area of research that supplements that of the primary supervisor. 3) The internal co-supervisor can also act in the place of the primary supervisor when he/she is away on periods of leave and thus provide continuity of advice and guidance. 4) If an external primary supervisor has been appointed/nominated and does not hold an appropriate higher degree, then an internal co-supervisor who has an appropriate higher degree must be appointed. 5) The Faculty Board in which the student is registered may appoint two or more co-supervisors to direct the work of a PhD candidate. 6) The Faculty Board in which the student is registered may appoint two or more co-supervisors to constitute a supervisory committee.

¹ Senior Scholar appointees may undertake primary supervision as they are employed by UCT on T2 contracts. Emeritus rankings may not be sole supervisors. Honorary appointments and Postdoctoral Fellows are generally excluded from primary supervision, but may co-supervise. In rare cases it may be appropriate for a member of PASS staff to supervise or co-supervise a student, in which case motivation must be given and permission sought from their appropriate Line Manager, Executive Director and DVC.

	<p>approving the Memorandum of Understanding, and Progress and Planned Activity forms.</p> <p>3) In the case of a primary supervisor taking extended Study & Research leave (i.e. sabbatical) it is expected that they retain the role of primary supervisor and if unable to fulfill their role in full, that arrangements are made, normally with the co-supervisor/s to assist in this role, and with the HOD’s knowledge.</p> <p>4) In the event that the Primary supervisor is external to UCT then an ‘Administrative supervisor’ needs to be nominated and indicated in the university administrative systems. (See ‘Administrative supervisor’ category below.)</p> <p>5) Where there are two or more internal supervisors (i.e. Primary supervisor plus co-supervisor/s, or a supervisory committee), the default position is that the Primary supervisor is accountable for administrative matters, including towards the end of each academic year reporting to the relevant Faculty Board/Committee/HOD on the progress of each student and making recommendations regarding continuation and re-registration for the following year. It is incumbent on the Primary supervisor to consult with co-supervisors and/or the supervisory committee particularly in cases where student progress may be questionable. In some cases student progress also needs to be reported to funding donors.</p>	
	<p>ADMINISTRATIVE SUPERVISOR</p>	
	<p>1. As noted above - it is the norm that the primary supervisor undertakes the role of administrative supervisor and therefore does not need to be indicated on UCT administrative systems.</p> <p>2. In some cases, such as when a primary supervisor is external to UCT or can no longer fulfill their required UCT administrative role (such as if they retired or resigned or were on extended medical leave before the student completed their degree), then it is the norm that the co-supervisor undertakes this role, assuming there is an internal UCT co-supervisor. In the absence of a suitable co-supervisor, the HOD must ensure appointment of an appropriate Administrative supervisor.</p> <p>3. If an administrative supervisor has been appointed they should be from the same department in which the student is registered and be responsible for all administrative functions required through the various stages of degree progression (as is described for the primary supervisor). Such a supervisor will not be involved in the bulk of the academic and research supervision but nevertheless plays a critical</p>	

	<p>role in ensuring compliance with UCT's rules and administrative requirements, particularly at the time of annual progression, submission and examination and is a (non-voting) part of the examination process, just as the primary supervisor is. The administrative supervisor must ensure nomination of suitable examiners together with the Primary supervisor and co-supervisors (if appropriate).</p>	
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EXTERNAL	PRIMARY SUPERVISOR	CO-SUPERVISOR/S
	<p>1. It is rare for an external supervisor to be appointed as the primary supervisor. In such cases motivation to the appropriate Board must be given and an administrative supervisor in the appropriate department at UCT will be appointed. This appointment must be approved and indicated in the appropriate UCT systems and with the approval of the HOD.</p>	<p>1) An external co-supervisor is appointed by the Faculty Board when a UCT primary supervisor seeks the benefit of the expertise of an external specialist as co-supervisor on parts of the thesis to complement the expertise of the primary supervisor.</p> <p>2) An external co-supervisor from a candidate's home institution must be appointed for a candidate who is in a sandwich or joint programme (e.g. USHEPIA), a co-managed, or co-badged degree.</p> <p>3) The Faculty Board in which the student is registered may appoint one or more external co-supervisors to direct the work of a PhD candidate.</p> <p>4) The Faculty Board in which the student is registered may appoint one or more external co-supervisors to constitute a supervisory committee.</p>

Note: This version is an edited version of the document approved at Board for Graduate Studies – 18 September, 2017. Acting DVC Prof Michael Kyobe and the Doctoral Degrees Board approved the edits in 18th December 2018.