



# Policy

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## Student and Supervisor Relationship

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## ACRONYMS

CHE	Council on Higher Education
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
HEQC	Higher Education Quality Committee
HEQSF	Higher Education Qualification Sub-Framework
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
PQM	Programme Qualification Mix
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority

## **1. PREAMBLE**

The Management College of Southern Africa (MANCOSA) is committed to providing high quality postgraduate education. As such, the institution firmly believes that a positive student-supervisor relationship will allow for the production of knowledge that will contribute positively towards social development and the economy.

This policy must be read in conjunction with the overarching Research Policy. All Master's students and supervisors alike are urged to familiarise themselves with the contents and terms set out in this policy document. This policy has been prepared using a number of leading research institutions around the world as a benchmark.

## **2. PURPOSE**

The supervision of Master's dissertations is a complex, arduous and highly individualised form of knowledge production. The supervision process should be seen as a learning opportunity for both the student and the supervisor. The purpose and aim of this policy is to present a set of guidelines for the management and smooth functioning of the student-supervisor relationship.

It will describe:

- 2.1 The relationship between supervisor and student as well as the responsibilities of both parties involved.
- 2.2 MANCOSA aims to provide structured support for all postgraduate students (mainly MBA students at this time), incorporating training in research methodologies and generic skills development opportunities, enabling our students to make best possible progress in their studies and to contribute to the development of South Africa and the region as a "knowledge society."

## **3. SCOPE**

The roles, responsibilities and expectations of the student and the supervisor remain the main focus of the policy. The guidelines provided seek to avoid the uncertainties and any conflict that may arise during the supervision process. Any conflict should be addressed in accordance with the Student Appeals Policy of MANCOSA.

## **4. SUPERVISION OF DISSERTATION**

Master's studies are not only career enhancing choices but are also a driving force for economic and social development and are an important component of research and scholarship. Supervisors are the key agents that affect the success of research students in the postgraduate (in this case, the MBA) programme. Both the student and the supervisor have clear roles and responsibilities that they are expected to fulfil. These are set out in this policy.

### **4.1 Roles and responsibilities of the supervisor**

It is essential that the supervisor demonstrate a keen interest as well as competence and expertise in the student's intended area of study. In general, the possibility of spreading the supervisory responsibility, for example by use of supervisory teams, is regarded as appropriate. The need of a primary supervisor with main responsibility will be regarded as the norm. Apart from this, there are certain responsibilities that supervisors are to be aware of. Supervisors are expected to:

- 4.1.1 Familiarise candidates with the regulations and schedules of MANCOSA for the respective degree.
- 4.1.2 The supervisor should provide the student with a work schedule that they are to follow in the course of their studies.
- 4.1.3 If possible at all to discuss prior to enrolment with the candidate the nature of the research and standards appropriate for the degree and negotiate an agreed research topic.
- 4.1.4 The supervisor should assist the student to choose a topic which enables research that contribute to new knowledge at a level appropriate to the degree to be completed in the specified time. The

experience of the supervisor is an important element in choosing the topic and it is the supervisor's responsibility to seek to ensure that the topic is appropriate.

- 4.1.5 Familiarise the MBA student with the *Supervisor-Student Responsibility Policy*.
- 4.1.6 Become familiar with the Research Policy of Mancosa.
- 4.1.7 The Supervisor should commit at least a 3 (three) year period of supervision and inform MANCOSA of any leave that may be taken which would affect the progress of the student.
- 4.1.8 Develop a good working relationship with the student.
- 4.1.9 Give guidance to the student about the nature of research and the standard expected, about the planning of the research programme and presentation of a research proposal, about literature research and appropriate courses to attend.
- 4.1.10 Provide advice regarding the planning and structuring of the research.
- 4.1.11 Provide the student with the necessary research training.
- 4.1.12 Maintain supervisory contact through regular meetings with the student; request regular written work or results of research findings. Reports on work from the student should be returned in the way and within the agreed time frame.
- 4.1.13 Be accessible to the student for consultation sessions.
- 4.1.14 Encourage students to be open about any problems they are experiencing.
- 4.1.15 Ensure that the Research Department is provided with the necessary documentation at the required time.
- 4.1.16 Keep a written record of the student's progress.
- 4.1.17 Provide all progress reports required by MANCOSA
- 4.1.18 Facilitate the student meeting other researchers and encourage attendance at research seminars, meetings or conferences as appropriate.
- 4.1.19 Seek to ensure progress of the student is evaluated annually and reported to the head of the postgraduate department.
- 4.1.20 Assess the completed thesis prior to the external examination.
- 4.1.21 Ensure that all ethical requirements have been met by the student during the research process.
- 4.1.22 Encourage the publication of the results of the research, where appropriate, provided that any published work is coherently incorporated in the thesis.
- 4.1.23 Ensure that the student is aware of all relevant funding opportunities open to apply for funding.

## **4.2 Roles and responsibilities of the MBA student**

The student is expected to fulfil her/his roles to the best of their abilities and ensure that she/he cooperate with the supervisor. The following are the key responsibilities of the student:

- 4.2.1 Write the research proposal in the stipulated time frame.
- 4.2.2 Be familiar with the Research policies of Mancosa.
- 4.2.3 Maintain a professional relationship at all times with the supervising academic members and other staff.
- 4.2.4 Undertake the research with dedication and commitment.
- 4.2.5 Advance the progress and complete the thesis in the prearranged time frame.
- 4.2.6 Conduct a literature search and keep abreast of new developments in the field of study.
- 4.2.7 Demonstrate technical and subject competence in written work.
- 4.2.8 Demonstrate writing and reference skills according to accepted postgraduate standards.
- 4.2.9 Establish a good working relationship with the supervisor.
- 4.2.10 Participate in conferences, seminars and symposiums related to the research area.
- 4.2.11 Produce a manuscript of a paper that is ready for publication in an accredited journal.
- 4.2.12 Keep the supervisor informed of any problems regarding the dissertation.
- 4.2.13 Take the initiative in identifying problems and seeking solutions to these.
- 4.2.14 Inform the supervisor of any non-academic problems experienced and which may impact on the research process.
- 4.2.15 Make regular appointments with the supervisor and consult regularly with the supervisor on the progress of the dissertation.

- 4.2.16 Prepare and write the dissertation in the required format.
- 4.2.17 Ensure that all ethical requirements have been met.
- 4.2.18 Agree to a schedule of meetings, which will ensure regular contact and inform the supervisor promptly of any impediment to the schedule of research and writing.
- 4.2.19 Document the progress of work as agreed with the supervisor and present written or other material in sufficient time as requested.
- 4.2.20 Inform the supervisor of any proposal to publish or make a presentation in connection with the work.
- 4.2.21 Notify the supervisor of his/her intention to submit at least three months prior to the proposed date of submission.
- 4.2.22 Inform the Head of Postgraduate Research and Supervisor/s as to progress in the annual evaluation. The purpose of this evaluation is to examine student progress, ensure the student has sufficient knowledge of the fundamentals of the chosen discipline, ensure the student has developed a clear idea of the research and has identified a viable and applicable topic.
- 4.2.23 Participate in research workshops in accordance with institutional requirements.
- 4.2.24 Ensure that MANCOSA is at all times in possession of current contact details (address, email and telephone numbers).
- 4.2.25 Observe the rule and regulations in connection with the use of institutional research and information services.
- 4.2.26 Prepare and submit a dissertation that is one's own research, in consultation with the Supervisor/s
- 4.2.27 Complete the required "MBA Supervisor Assessment" on a yearly basis and hand it in to the MBA programme director.

## 5. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DEPARTMENT

The responsibilities of MANCOSA are to

- Encourage the growth and development of research that is directed at improving the economic conditions and business environment.
- Provide the student with a supervisor that is suitably qualified with demonstrated expertise in the student's area of study.
- Provide or make available the information and research resources that will be needed for the successful completion of the thesis.
- Arrange for adequate supervisory arrangements via the Head of Postgraduate Research if the Supervisor is on leave for more than a month.
- Ensure that the thesis research of the student is within the Supervisors professional expertise (otherwise a new Supervisor should be appointed) and where a change in research direction occurs; recommend appropriate graduate supervisory adjustments to the Head of Postgraduate Research.
- Monitor progress of the student prior to the annual review and in accordance with MANCOSA policies
- Ensure a candidate submit a dissertation with the approval of the supervisor who confirms approval for examination of the final draft of the dissertation.
- Deal with all complaints, grievances and appeals in a manner that is ethical and compliant with the MANCOSA's Student Appeals Policy.
- Make sure via the Head of Postgraduate Research of compliance of all administrative and supervisory responsibilities
- Ensure that appropriate supervision is available to the student and that the supervisor is appropriately qualified, sufficiently expert and experienced to offer supervisory advice to the student.
- Training as supervisor is available for all early career supervisors who have not supervised a Master's degree to completion.
- Ascertain that alternative supervisory arrangements are made if a supervisor becomes sick, goes on leave or sabbatical.
- Ascertain that joint supervision is assured where the research topic spans different areas or disciplines (interdisciplinary). In the case of joint supervision one of the supervisors need not be a member of the staff of MANCOSA.

- The Head of Postgraduate Research should ensure that supervisory advice to a MBA student is not compromised by supervisors with a too great workload of postgraduate students.

## **6. CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT**

6.1 All supervisors must sign a contractual agreement with the student agreeing on the supervisor-student responsibilities as set out in the “Supervisor-Student Responsibility Policy” and “Research Policy” of MANCOSA.

6.2 All supervisors must sign a contractual agreement annually that would include, but not be limited by the following;

- Responsibilities and obligations of supervisors
- Code of conduct
- Supervision requirements
- Time and planning allocations
- Reporting requirements
- Financial arrangements
- Termination of contract and dispute resolution mechanisms.

## **7. DISPUTES**

7.1 In the case of dispute between a student and a supervisor, the Head of Postgraduate Research should;

7.1.1 Discuss the matter with the parties involved.

7.1.2 Write to the parties concerned giving an opinion on the situation on the situation and requesting a written response from them.

7.1.3 If a satisfactory resolution is not reached, refer to the Research Committee or the Student Appeals Committee (SAC).

**ANNEXURE A: STUDENT AND SUPERVISOR AGREEMENT**



Date: dd/mm/yyyy

Dear XYZ

**MBA DISSERTATION: SUPERVISOR ALLOCATION**

Thank you for submitting the topic of your Dissertation. The Research Department has assigned the following dissertation supervisor to you:

<b>Supervisor name and surname</b>	
<b>Email</b>	
<b>Contact number</b>	

The contact details of your Research Co-ordinator (RC) are as follows:

<b>Research co-ordinator name and surname</b>	
<b>Email</b>	
<b>Contact number</b>	

**PLEASE NOTE THAT YOU HAVE 6 MONTHS TO COMPLETE THE DISSERTATION FROM THE DATE THE SUPERVISOR IS ALLOCATED. THIS DEADLINE WILL SERVE AS THE DATE OF YOUR FIRST SUBMISSION OF THE DISSERTATION.**

**DEADLINE FOR FIRST SUBMISSION:**

**PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING:**

- You are to make contact with your supervisor immediately upon receiving this letter.
- Email the topic approved by MANCOSA to the supervisor.
- Upon your first meeting you are required to communicate all deadlines to the supervisor.
- You are required to develop a work plan/ time frame with the supervisor which outlines:
  - The timelines for the proposal and dissertation i.e. how much time you will allocate to the proposal, your data collection and each chapter of the dissertation (Keep in mind the MANCOSA feedback times)
  - The dates for work submission by yourself to the supervisor
  - The dates you will receive feedback on the work submitted by the supervisor.
- If you have emailed work to your supervisor and do not get a response, call the supervisor and follow up on whether they have received your email.
- Any difficulties experienced by you with regards to the supervisor are to be formally communicated (via email) to the research coordinator. As a student you are required to provide your research coordinator with feedback on the progress of your dissertation. This will be emailed to you.



**The following procedure applies to students submitting their proposal:**

1. You are required to work with your supervisor on the research proposal.
2. Once completed, it must be submitted to your supervisor to be assessed.
3. The supervisor will provide corrections on the document (either using track changes or by marking and scanning feedback to you in a PDF document).
4. You must make the changes indicated by the supervisor and submit both, the marked proposal **AND** the amended proposal (in Microsoft Word format) to your research coordinator for final approval by the Research Department to permit you to commence with your dissertation.
5. Should your proposal not be approved on the first submission, you will liaise with your research coordinator until he/she indicates that the Research Department has **approved** your proposal at which point you may commence with the dissertation.

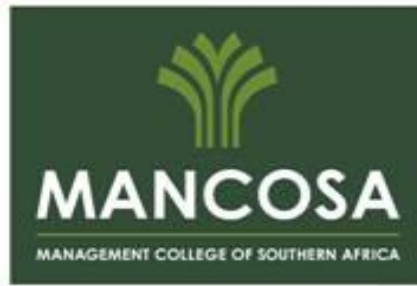
**PLEASE ADHERE TO THE FOLLOWING PROCESSES WHEN SENDING THE FIRST SUBMISSION OF YOUR DISSERTATION:**

1. When your supervisor approves your final dissertation, and has indicated that he/she has submitted a report for you, please email your completed dissertation in Microsoft Word format to [dissertations@mancosa.co.za](mailto:dissertations@mancosa.co.za) (indicate in your email that this is your first submission).
2. Your dissertation is run through **Turnitin** for a plagiarism assessment. **PLEASE NOTE THAT PLAGIARISM IS A SERIOUS OFFENCE AND CAN HAVE SEVERE CONSEQUENCES.**
3. If a plagiarism query exists the dissertation will be sent back to you with the Turnitin Report, a warning letter and you will be given an opportunity to rectify the plagiarism.
4. Your dissertation will then be sent to an internal moderator for marking as a quality assurance measure.
5. After internal moderation, your work will be sent back to you to implement all changes (if any) as indicated by the internal moderator.
6. Once all changes have been implemented, please resubmit your revised dissertation copy to [dissertations@mancosa.co.za](mailto:dissertations@mancosa.co.za) along with the initial marked copy. (Indicate in your email that you have implemented the changes as per the internal moderator's comments).
7. Once submitted the dissertation is checked and sent out for external and final examination.
8. After external examination, your work will be sent back to you to implement all changes (if any) as indicated by the external examiner.
9. The final amended version of your dissertation must be submitted for internal checking (indicate in your email that you have completed the corrections as per the external examiner, and your work is ready for the final internal checking).
10. Once it has been determined that all of the recommended changes proposed by the examiner have been effected, you will receive official authorisation to submit your final hardbound dissertation copy.

**PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING:**

- All dissertation submissions and resubmissions must be emailed to [dissertations@mancosa.co.za](mailto:dissertations@mancosa.co.za)
- All proposal submission must go to your Research Coordinator.
- All supervision related issues must be reported directly to your Research Coordinator.
- Students are required to respond to the Research Coordinators request for progress reports.
- The Research Department is not liable for processing dissertations for moderation/examination if it is sent to email addresses other than the one indicated above.
- No spiral bound copies of the dissertation will be accepted unless specifically requested by the Research Department

Regards  
Research Department  
MANCOSA



Date: dd/mm/yyyy

Dear XYZ

### SUPERVISION OF MBA DISSERTATION

You have been appointed as the supervisor for the following student:

<b>Student name and surname</b>	
<b>Email</b>	
<b>Contact number</b>	

A research coordinator is assigned to each student. The research coordinator is responsible for providing additional support to both you and the student. The coordinator along with the research department is also responsible for marking and checking the research proposal.

<b>Research coordinator name and surname</b>	
<b>Email</b>	
<b>Contact number</b>	

**PLEASE NOTE THAT STUDENTS HAVE 6 MONTHS TO COMPLETE THE DISSERTATION FROM THE DATE THE SUPERVISOR IS ALLOCATED. THIS DEADLINE WILL SERVE AS THE DATE FOR THE FIRST SUBMISSION OF THE DISSERTATION.**

#### DEADLINE FOR FIRST SUBMISSION:

As the supervisor you are required to provide the student with academic guidance on both the proposal and the dissertation process. You are not to edit the students work or write any section or part of the dissertation for the student. Your role is merely to guide the student in the right direction.

#### PLEASE TAKE NOTE THE FOLLOWING:

- The student is to make contact with you immediately upon receiving the allocation letter.
- The student will email the topic approved by MANCOSA to you.
- Upon your first meeting the student is required to communicate all deadlines to you.
- You are required to develop a work plan/ time frame with the student which outlines:
  - The timelines for the proposal and dissertation i.e. how much time they will allocate to the proposal, the data collection and each chapter of the dissertation (Keeping in mind the MANCOSA feedback times).
  - The dates for work submission by the student to you.
  - The dates you will provide feedback on the work submitted by the student.
- If the student would like to finish the dissertation in less than 6 months, the student needs to communicate this with you and you must be in agreement.
- If the student has emailed work to you they are to follow up with you telephonically so you are aware of the email being sent to you.
- Any difficulties experienced by you with regards to the student are to be formally communicated (via email) to the research coordinator. As a supervisor you are required to provide the research coordinator with feedback on the progress of the student.

## THE FOLLOWING PROCEDURE APPLIES TO STUDENTS SUBMITTING THEIR PROPOSAL:

6. Students are required to work with their supervisor on the research proposal.
7. Once completed, it must be submitted to the supervisor to be assessed.
8. The supervisor will provide corrections on the document (either using track changes or by marking and scanning feedback to you in a PDF document) and send it to the student for implementation.
9. You are required to submit this marked copy to [research.claims@mancosa.co.za](mailto:research.claims@mancosa.co.za) together with your claim form so that you may claim R500 for the guidance and assessment of the research proposal.
10. Students must make the changes indicated by you and submit both, the marked proposal **AND** the amended proposal (in Microsoft Word format) to the research coordinator for final approval by the Research Department to permit the student to commence with the dissertation.
11. Should the proposal not be approved on the first submission, the student will liaise with the research coordinator and yourselves until the proposal has been **approved**.

## STUDENTS NEED TO ADHERE TO THE FOLLOWING PROCESSES WHEN SENDING THE FIRST SUBMISSION OF THE DISSERTATION:

11. The supervisor has to approve the final dissertation before the student may submit it. You are required to give the student final feedback by marking the dissertation and submitting the final report on <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/mancosadissertation>. **Please note that we cannot proceed with the moderation/examination of your student's dissertation until this report has been submitted.**
12. The final dissertation must be emailed to [dissertations@mancosa.co.za](mailto:dissertations@mancosa.co.za) in Microsoft Word format. (Students should indicate in the email that this is the first submission.)
13. The dissertation is run through software ((Turnitin) for a plagiarism assessment. **Please note that plagiarism is a serious offence and may have severe consequences.**
14. If a plagiarism query exists the dissertation will be sent back to the student with the Turnitin Report, a warning letter and they will be given an opportunity to rectify the plagiarism.
15. The dissertation will then be sent to an internal moderator for marking as a quality assurance measure.
16. After internal moderation, the dissertation will be sent back to the student to implement all changes (if any) suggested by the internal moderator. You are required to assist the student with these changes.
17. Once all changes have been implemented, the dissertation is resubmitted to [dissertations@mancosa.co.za](mailto:dissertations@mancosa.co.za) along with the initial marked copy. (Students must indicate in the email that they have implemented the changes as per the internal moderator's comments).
18. Once submitted the dissertation is checked and sent out for external and final examination.
19. After external examination, the dissertation will be sent back to the student to implement all changes (if any) as indicated by the external examiner.
20. At this point you are cleared to claim for the student. Please make sure the following is sent in with your claim to [research.claims@mancosa.co.za](mailto:research.claims@mancosa.co.za):
  - a. The claim form
  - b. The Tutor information form
  - c. The survey monkey report has been submitted online

## PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING:

- You are required to make contact with the student on a regular basis as determined between you and the student. In addition, constructive guidance and support is required in writing the dissertation.
- Both you and the student must adhere to the proposal and dissertation guidelines as indicated in the MANCOSA Research Guidelines. **PLEASE BE AWARE THAT STUDENTS ARE MARKED ACCORDING TO THE MANCOSA GUIDES AND ARE PENALISED FOR USING OTHER PROPOSAL AND DISSERTATION FORMATS.**
- All dissertation submissions and resubmissions must be emailed to [dissertations@mancosa.co.za](mailto:dissertations@mancosa.co.za).
- All proposal submissions must go to the research coordinator.
- All supervision related issues must be reported directly to the research coordinator.
- Students **ARE NOT** required to have the dissertation or proposal professionally edited and the supervisor **MAY NOT** offer the student to do it for them and charge them for it. This is a conflict of interest.
- Supervisors are paid by MANCOSA. Any supervisor found billing the students for supervision will be removed as a MANCOSA supervisor.

Regards  
Research Department  
MANCOSA