


UNIVERSITY OF THE WESTERN CAPE			
 <p>UNIVERSITY of the WESTERN CAPE</p>	<p>RESEARCH POLICY ... Section 5: Research Capacity Development</p>	Council Approval Reference Number	C2009/04
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SECTION 5: RESEARCH CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

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¹https://www.nationalplanningcommission.org.za/assets/Documents/NDP_Chapters/devplan_ch9_0.pdf

²<https://static.pmg.org.za/170428DraftPolicyFrameworkonInternationalisationofHEinSAv2.pdf>

Preface

The University is committed to developing and to increasing the research competence and expertise of its staff, particularly among those previously disadvantaged and women, by providing opportunities for new and inexperienced researchers to develop their research and publication skills. The University remains committed to promoting the development of staff members that do not have doctoral qualifications or who are not actively doing research and publishing.

5.1. Support for Staff for Attainment of Doctoral and Masters Qualification

Faculties of the University are at varying stages of development in their research programmes, and not all departments have an active tradition of research, innovation or publication. The University's strategy is to vigorously expand participation in research by all instructional and research staff, including professional support staff. In the pursuit of the target of 75% of instructional and research staff obtaining doctoral degrees by 2030¹, UWC will pursue a "grow-our-own-timber" approach to developing people of the designated groups. UWC's diversity and equity strategy should ensure that staff members are afforded the opportunity for staff development and completion of their higher degrees. This should include a planned schedule of leave and support in research active teams at the level of departments and research entities.

The University is committed to supporting staff to complete doctoral level studies. As an expression of that commitment, the following strategic initiatives are applied:

- Full tuition rebates for staff registering at UWC for their programmes and partial rebates at partner institutions with whom we have such agreements
- Active engagement with capacity building initiatives that form part of the University Capacity Development Programme supported by DHET and state-funded agencies.
- Strategic partnerships that can offer dual degrees and staff exchange
- Budgetary allocations for matching funds on capacity building initiatives and funding instruments (e/g/ Thuthuka, Black Academics Advancement Programme, etc))
- Strategic application of the University Capacity Development Grant for doctoral completion

Tuition rebates, for staff registering for their programmes at UWC or at designated partner institutions, are in line with the relevant HR Policy (Section D10: Subsidization and rebates of fees in respect of staff and their families). UWC will explore strategic partnerships - and staff exchange - which offer opportunities for joint doctoral degrees, aligned with the *Draft Policy Framework for the Internationalisation of Higher Education in South Africa*². This model matches research expertise and supervision skills established at UWC with the requisite expertise elsewhere, based on the notion of partnership and collaboration. Strategic funds should be provided by the University to promote visits by staff registered for doctoral degrees to such foreign partnership institutions. The University actively engages with capacity building initiatives that form part of the University Capacity Development Program which includes the University Staff Doctoral Programme and *Academic Doctoral Advancements Programme Towards Transformation* supported by DHET and other state funded agencies. Budgetary allocations for matching funds are made on such capacity building initiatives and funding instruments (e.g. the NRF Thuthuka programme).

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5.2. Support for Staff after completion of a doctoral degree

- i. The University needs to create the environment for staff with recent doctoral qualifications to develop further into established and productive researchers with the ability to successfully compete for external research grants, take on and supervise Masters and Doctoral students, establish national/international research networks, etc. Support for such staff members includes time off and support, including sabbatical leave, to undertake research at leading national/international institutions in their respective research areas, developmental workshops on successful research grant writing and research supervision. Moreover, such staff members must be provided appropriate mentorship and assistance in disseminating their research findings, e.g. in the form of conference presentations and publications. As an expression of its commitment, the university supports staff to optimally leverage various capacity building instruments (e.g. BAAP, USDP, UCDG, Thuthuka).
- ii. The University needs to create the environment for staff with doctoral qualifications to develop further into leading researchers with the ability to successfully compete for national (other than NRF, MRC, HSSRC, etc) and international research grants, take on and supervise Masters and Doctoral students, expand national/international research networks, improve national/international research standing, including obtaining and/or improving NRF rating, etc.

It is important that a five-year developmental trajectory be agreed upon and monitored for each qualifying staff member.

5.3. Post-Doctoral Support

In accordance with internationally accepted professional practice, a Postdoctoral Research Fellowship will normally be awarded to an individual with a doctoral degree to continue with dedicated research for a certain period of time (Refer to Section 12: Post-Doctoral Research Fellowship Policy).

The Department Research Development, along with other UWC stakeholders, will from time-to-time provide professional development courses and seminars to assist the PDRFs. The PDRFs may organise within the University seminars and training-courses among themselves or for senior students in their specific areas of research with the endorsement of the Deputy Dean for Research and Postgraduate Studies in the relevant Faculty.

5.4. Enhancement of Postgraduate Education

A crucial component of research capacity development is the strengthening of postgraduate education at the University. Central to growing the University's cohort of Masters' and Doctoral (M & D) students, is increasing the capacity to support postgraduate research through (i) enhancing the supervisory skills of staff members, (ii) improving staff qualifications, (iii) vigorous marketing of our M & D Programmes, and (iv) strengthening governance related to higher degrees.

The University must develop and refine strategies to reduce time to degree and improve the quality of graduates and resulting research. Strategic priorities should include:"

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- Commitment to continue situational analysis and needs assessment.
- Strengthening governance and improving administrative efficiency related to higher degrees
- Realistic postgraduate targets and the development of a recruitment plan.
- Expanding the scholarship database – This must be clarified or removed?

In this regard, the Division for Postgraduate Studies will nurture and develop a postgraduate research culture in partnership with faculties and student administration. Key operational activities will include:

- Developing a programme of transferable skills training that can support students in the research process.
- Developing a programme of transferable skills training for supervisors to strengthen supervisory capacity and management of supervised research.
- Training and capacity building in research administration and management systems/ processes related to higher degrees
- Explore funding opportunities and instruments for postgraduate research.

5.5. Infrastructure Support

Strategies to improve staff qualifications and participation in research and enrolment of postgraduate students necessarily demand a strengthening of the University's supporting infrastructure in the form of computing facilities, library holdings, equipped research laboratories, etc.

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